

Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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Arrival of Mennonite immigrants in the New World, ca. 1860. This pencil drawing illustrates the means of passage our forebears experienced throughout several centuries of migrations to the Americas, ever since the 1600s.

Drawing by Marcus Wegner

The (Old) Mennonite Church

History and Faith

The Mennonite Church as a North American body goes back to Colonial times with the first major Mennonite immigration to Pennsylvania in 1683. It is the oldest and largest of the several organized Mennonite groups in North America. The Mennonite faith, however, is grounded in the Anabaptist heritage originating in the sixteenth-century Reformation era. The time and place generally accepted is January 21, 1525, in Zurich, Switzerland.

A major point of difference from other Reformation churches is the conviction that the church must remain independent of and

separate from the state; the Anabaptists created the first free church to arise out of the Reformation. Separation of church and state was the underlying issue which ultimately led to the magisterial proclamation of January 21, 1525, at Zurich, outlawing the incipient Anabaptist movement by denying its members the right to assemble. They did assemble, however, probably the same night, with their leaders, Conrad Grebel, Felix Mantz and George Blaurock. For many months the group had been denying the validity of infant baptism, viewing baptism as valid only for those who respond in

faith to the divine call for a life of Christian discipleship. That night Blaurock asked Grebel to baptize him, after which Blaurock proceeded to baptize the others upon the confession of their faith. This was the birth of the free-church movement, a countercultural idea in its day. In the persecution that attempted to suppress the movement, thousands of Anabaptists throughout Europe were martyred.

The loosely conceived Anabaptist movement already from the time of its tenuous conception embodied a substance and spirit that set it apart from both Protestantism and Catholicism. It held to a firm biblical foundation which brought it into proximity with Protestantism's *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone); but it did not assume Protestantism's ultimate responsibility for all of society. This was a major factor that caused the Zurich Anabaptists to break from Ulrich Zwingli, the Zurich religious and political figure, in the first place. The Anabaptist movement also incorporated something of the monastic level within Roman Catholicism, yet broadened this concept to include the whole of the gathered church.

The Zurich Anabaptists began as a peace church in faith and life. At the first Anabaptist "synod" in 1527 at Schleithem, Switzerland, they reaffirmed in Seven Articles this strong commitment to close community and to the way of peace and love as the only appropriate setting and means for the work of God's kingdom; and the key, they believed, lies in the idea of the gathered community of believing disciples. Also, they affirmed that the necessary inner strength and resolve to live as obedient disciples of Jesus individually and corporately is found only within those congregations gathered in the name of Jesus where his spirit lodges. This has been the essence of Anabaptist-Mennonite life, mission and witness; it has traditionally involved the whole person, not only one's soul. The Anabaptist-Mennonite faith asserts that all war is wrong, rejects participation in even a "just" war, and works against all injustice through the higher ethic of love.

The 1527 Schleithem Confession is the



Anabaptist leader, Hans Luginbuhl, in Chaltet (Court), Switzerland. Drawing by Ludwig Vogel. Courtesy, Swiss Society for Mennonite History.

earliest Anabaptist statement of its kind; it continues in use as a central expression of the faith of the Mennonite Church. It embodies a simplicity of idea, and includes those primary motifs of discipleship within community with the outworking of love, without which the movement would come apart. Other such expressions in later generations were the Dordrecht Confession of 1632 and the Mennonite Confession of Faith (Mennonite Church) of 1963.

A decade later in the 1530s a parallel Anabaptist movement emerged in the Low Countries. Menno Simons, after whom the Mennonite Church is named, was one of the leaders in Northern Europe. The Eastern branch of Anabaptism, the Hutterites, is a third important segment which developed initially in Austria and Moravia. After a sojourn of several generations in Russia, this group ultimately immigrated in the 1870s to North America in search of religious liberty.

An important part of the larger Mennonite picture is the story of Mennonite migrations, mostly from the Low Countries, although also from the Upper German lands, to Prussia and Russia, from where many hundreds of families immigrated since the 1870s to North America. Most of them settled in the plains provinces and

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states of Canada and the United States. Other groups emigrated to various parts of Latin America.

Various outside influences have left an imprint upon Mennonitism which is in its fifth century. Severe persecution of the Anabaptists continued for over a century in many parts of Europe, and suppression of the movement continued well into the nineteenth century. Pietism (1670ff) seems to have spoken to later generations of Mennonites, many of whom had learned to survive by becoming "die Stillen im Lande" ("the quiet in the land"). Many others responded to these influences by emigrating. Although a few Mennonites immigrated to North America in the 1640s (New York) and 1660s (Delaware), the first permanent Mennonite settlement was made at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1683, two years after the founding of the colony. This is the beginning point of the Mennonite Church as it now exists in North America. Many waves of immigrations, especially from Switzerland, South Germany and Alsace brought Mennonites first of all to southeast Pennsylvania. Gradually, others came to Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas, and later to Ontario, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Kansas. Today, Mennonites can be found in almost every province and state of Canada and the United States.

Throughout the nineteenth century members of the Mennonite Church were bilingual, with German as the main language. By about 1890 English began to displace the German. After 1890 the spirit of revivalism and the outreach of the Western world renewed Mennonite interests

in urban as well as overseas missions. Higher education began about this time with the founding of Goshen College in 1894, followed soon by Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas, and Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.



On the way to the Sunday meeting

From the 1890s to about 1950, a cultural conservatism developed which set the Mennonites apart culturally, in dress and other customs, from their contemporaries. Such had not been the case earlier—when simplicity in dress and life meant not going to extremes rather than wearing a peculiar garb. Both Fundamentalism and liberalism also affected the church during these decades. A major Mennonite institution, Goshen College, was closed for a year in the thick of controversy and suspicion.

The change from the German to the English language, and the acceptance of many new ideas eroded the strong sense of continuity with the mainstream of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition to the point that Mennonites were in danger of losing their historical rootedness. Hence, the new quest for roots, begun in the 1920s at Goshen College (Indiana), perhaps best depicted in the book title, *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Guy F. Hersherberger, ed., Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1957), was a necessary counterbalance in maintaining a Mennonite identity.

Love and nonresistance as a way of life was central in the Anabaptist-Mennonite vision. A majority of men drafted in the Second World War opted for alternative service (Alternative Service System in Canada, and Civilian Public Service in the United States) and performed services in mental hospitals, forestry, and agriculture, in a broad plan originally worked out by the Brethren, Mennonites, Quakers and other groups, and then approved by the governments in Ottawa and Washington.

Since the Second World War era, the once-rural Mennonites have become increasingly urbanized. The violence and upheavals of the 1960s throughout the Western world affected



Spiritual kith and kin of all Mennonites who come from the Amish-Mennonite tradition. Most Mennonites living west of the Allegheny Mountains, and in the Western Ontario Conference, come out of this tradition. Oil painting by Fritz Huguénin-Lassauguette (1888), entitled, "Anabaptist family from the Amish tradition, in Les Bressels, Neuenburger Jura, (Switzerland)." Courtesy, Swiss Society for Mennonite History



Pioneer prairie home, 1870s

Mennonitism, as well as all other segments of North American society. The traditional stand of nonresistance was thoroughly tested, and this time emerged with a substantial transformation which took into account the modern complexities of an urbanized society. The world was again a place in which the Mennonite Church found itself involved. Some felt that the Mennonite Church had not only entered the world but in a very real sense had taken on the essence of the world. But there are real signs of strength, currently, which suggest that what is emerging is a new kind of biblical nonconformity to the world rather than a selling out of those central ideas and realities which had defined the Mennonite Church for over four centuries. Community is still central in the thought of a large core of Mennonites, as is the affirmation of Christian discipleship and service, based upon Christian love and peace.

The Mennonite Church Structure and Program

Prior to 1860 there was no attempt to create a unified denominational structure for all North American Mennonites. Mennonite congregations from their beginning organized into area conferences, and were known as the Franconia Conference of Mennonites (southeastern Pennsylvania), or the Ontario Conference of Mennonites, and so on.

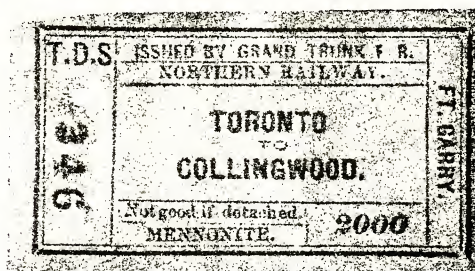
After the eastern Pennsylvania schism of



The Conestoga Wagon, Mennonites' means of transporting household goods.

1847, "New Mennonites" came into being, who in turn referred to the Franconia Conference of Mennonites as "Old Mennonites." The term "New Mennonites" was not used much beyond eastern Pennsylvania. In 1860 the "New Mennonites" helped to establish the denominational structure known as the General Conference Mennonite Church. The term "Old Mennonites" was never an official term, although it was commonly used for purposes of identification. "Mennonite Church" was the unofficial designation prior to 1971, but since then it has become the official designation.

In 1864 a new and important development helped to bring some unity to the Mennonite area conferences. John F. Funk began his *Herald of Truth* and *Herold der Wahrheit* for the Mennonite Church, which by then had spread from Pennsylvania to Kansas and even beyond. This paper became a strong Mennonite forum of ideas and concerns, as well as a means for the regular publishing of the early sixteenth-century Anabaptist testimonials of faith in both the original language and in translation. Another scholar, John Horsch, soon joined in this publishing venture, and a mass of well-edited materials found its way into the hands of thousands of Mennonites. This included mammoth works such as the *Martyrs Mirror* in English and German translation, as well as the *Complete Works of Menno Simons*. Peace education was of special import, especially during the American Civil War of the 1860s.



Mennonite refugee train ticket # 346

In the 1870s, when the Russian Mennonites came to seek asylum in North America, a broad program of mutual sharing took place. John Funk was at the center of this mutual aid program in the United States (the Mennonite Board of Guardians, 1873), although the Mennonite Executive Aid Committee of Eastern Pennsylvania had also been set up to offer help to the Russian Mennonites. Jacob Y. Shantz of the Ontario Conference coordinated the Mennonite Church efforts in Canada. The *Herald of Truth* solicited aid churchwide, and the



The General Council of the Mennonite General Conference, 1949. Front Row (left to right): C. B. Shoemaker, Oscar Burkholder, Paul Mininger, Amos O. Hostetler; Second Row: John F. Garber, E. S. Garber, Nelson Kauffman, John Hochstetler, Wm. R. Eicher, Ray F. Yoder, John R. Mumaw; Third Row: Harold S. Bender, C. L. Graber, J. C. Wenger, John H. Mosemann, Truman Brunk, Elmer Hershberger; Back Row: Phil Frey, A. J. Metzler, Elmer Stoltzfus, Wilfred Schlegel, John L. Horst, Chester K. Lehman, Gideon Yoder.

response was positive and generous. Contributions were also received from non-Mennonites such as the Church of the Brethren. Thousands of dollars in aid came in the form of cash gifts, interest-free loans, and the provision of shelter and employment for individuals and families.

If there was a Mennonite Church institution during the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was indeed the *Herald of Truth* and the publishing efforts of John F. Funk, who lived during most of this time at Elkhart, Indiana. This was in large part the reason that the Elkhart area became the place where Mennonite Church missions, higher education, and relief work originated in the late nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries.

By the 1890s enough changes surfaced within the Mennonite Church to bring into being a denominational structure for the Mennonite Church, called Mennonite General Conference (not to be confused with the parallel General Conference Mennonite Church structure which operates out of Newton, Kansas). This new structure, developed in 1898, had a more centralized authority which vied for power with the older congregational and area-conference authority. Four eastern Mennonite area conferences never did join Mennonite General Conference. An important procedural change was the idea of majority rule, which to some degree supplanted the more traditional rule by

consensus of the total body. John F. Funk, an early advocate of such a denominational structure, changed his mind when the decision for forming Mennonite General Conference was to be made by a majority of Mennonite conferences instead of on the basis of a consensus of all conferences. John Funk opposed the new tide for a time, but ultimately lost in his concerns. A new era also brought other changes which Funk never fully understood and which were largely responsible for his undoing as a major leader in the Mennonite Church.

This new era from 1898 to the 1960s was an era of strong churchwide leaders. Daniel Kauffman (d. 1944) was the central figure from the 1890s until the time of the Second World War. He was an influential church leader who helped bring unity to the Mennonite Church during a time of great divergency. George R. Brunk, Sr., John H. Mosemann, Sr., and J. B. Smith were unusually powerful spokesmen for a cultural conservatism combined with the desire to hold onto the Christian fundamentals of faith and doctrine as developed within the North American Fundamentalist camp. J. E. Hartzler and N. E. Byers were strong spokesmen for a contrasting theology akin to elements of nineteenth-century liberalism. Harold S. Bender, Orie O. Miller, Guy F. Hershberger, and others from what has been called "the Goshen school," were caught in the midst of a

mounting crisis of the highest proportions. They consciously decided to take a third option, neither liberal nor Fundamentalist, but one which affirmed the Christian faith of the gathered community, founded upon the gospel of peace.

In 1944 Bender completed his "Anabaptist Vision," which has become a classic piece on the form and substance of the Anabaptist and Mennonite way of life. Bender based his vision directly upon the early Anabaptist faith and life, and noted the interrelatedness and interaction of discipleship and community as the needed focus and reality within which a true expression of love and peace could emerge. Bender called the Mennonite Church back to its roots, and many brothers and sisters within the church felt a kinship to this call. This neo-Anabaptism gave birth to a renewed dedication to a Christian way of life, rather than to a legalistic set of principles which were to define doctrine and faith (the option of the Fundamentalist), or to a form of humanism where humankind can go it alone (nineteenth-century liberalism).

The "recovery of the Anabaptist Vision" is still giving definition to the Mennonite Church as a body. This can be seen in the seminars and conferences on Anabaptist themes. Traveling seminars to Europe trace the Anabaptist roots of life, faith and witness. There is also an ongoing, general Mennonite concern for peace itself as being the logical expression of the close, gathered community. Students in Mennonite colleges and high schools are producing research papers on Mennonite themes.

The *Gospel Herald*, the present official church organ, is equaling the impact of the earlier *Herald of Truth*. It is helping the Mennonite Church to be an interdependent body, where truth emerges from the group and each member as a disciple is worthy of a hearing. It serves a significant role in keeping the ever-increasing numbers of Mennonites in dialogue with one another.

In the late 1960s the Mennonite Church as a denomination attempted to realign its structures with the ideas and vision underlying its way of life. This time all area conferences agreed to the process of consensus, and by 1971 the time seemed ripe to move ahead. A new Mennonite Church organization replaced the old Mennonite General Conference. The congregation was

again to take its rightful place in the new structure as the place where authority is located. Consensus was to continue to be the process for decision-making.

The Mennonite Church has a modified congregational polity. The congregation is the locus of authority, although congregations belong to conferences, which in turn relate to the Mennonite Church General Board. Conferences send delegates to the biennial Mennonite Church General Assembly to which the General Board is responsible.



Mennonite General Conference, 1959, at Goshen, Indiana. Book display

Five program boards, one standing committee, one council, and some associate groups define structurally the organization of the Mennonite Church, namely: Board of Congregational Ministries, Board of Education, Board of Missions, Mutual Aid Board, Publication Board, the Historical Committee, and the Council on Faith, Life and Strategy. The associate groups include the Women's Missionary and Service Commission, the Afro-American Mennonite Association, and the National Council of Hispanic Mennonite Churches.

Adult baptized membership in the Mennonite Church totals over one-hundred thousand, with about ten percent in Canada, and ninety percent in the United States. In addition there are groups in other countries closely related to the Mennonite Church with membership totaling over forty thousand. There has been a steady growth throughout the twentieth century from a membership in 1906 of twenty-seven thousand (the first year when membership was numbered).



Southwest (Area) Conference, 1980. Food line (at Calvary Church)

The Current Mennonite Scene

Major cultural changes came into the Mennonite Church through a home missions program which began before the turn of the century, but which took on a new dimension after the Second World War. The slogan, "every congregation, an outpost," resulted in many new congregations. Afro-Americans, Hispanics, native Americans, and many others who were not traditionally Mennonite by birth joined the Mennonite scene. This new dimension where the Mennonite Church has become a cluster of differing cultures is compatible with the Anabaptist Vision and can be seen as the genuine outworking of the original vision itself.

Mission leads to incorporating the new believers into the body, and each new member becomes part of the gathered congregation where truth emerges from the body. The Schleithem model for church life is a natural model for including any and all cultural groups which open themselves up to community where the spirit of Jesus is understood to be present. Problems certainly need to be acknowledged for what they are in any attempt to extend the Mennonite faith to include new cultural groups, so the church must continue to hold this ideal high and strong. This same ideal should be able to provide as well a natural milieu within which to resolve current problems in the area of re-defining male-female roles. It is important that every brother and sister in the church always perceive the gathered people as "we," and never "they."

A qualitative change in the overseas missions program of the Mennonite Church surfaced in

the 1950s. Overseas missions had been a direct extension of the North American Mennonite Church in India (1899ff), in South America (1917ff) and in Africa (1934ff), patterned in many cases after Protestant norms for mission already established at the time. After the 1950s the move toward indigenous churches brought new approaches to overseas mission. These were more in line with traditional Mennonite congregational patterns of authority and leadership than were the earlier paternalistic relations between missionary and native people.

To sum up the present Mennonite Church program is no small task. Area conferences and the cluster of congregations that belong to each area carry many aspects of the Mennonite program of education, service and witness. These programs have been equally as effective as the denominational program. Area conferences, of which there are more than twenty, are carrying an ever-increasing share of the Mennonite Church program as they are able.

The Board of Congregational Ministries, created in 1971, carries on much of the program of the previous Mennonite General Conference, including congregational education, stewardship, evangelism, peace education, youth work, and so forth. It provides assistance to area conferences for their congregations.



Southwest (Area) Conference, 1983. Hubert Brown, pastor of Calvary Church and newly elected Conference moderator

The Board of Education is effectively coordinating the programs of many Mennonite institutions of learning, especially seminaries, colleges and high schools.

The Board of Missions—along with area-conference agencies and the Mennonite Central Committee—has opened the eyes of countless

youth through Voluntary Service at home and abroad over the period of several generations. Its program also includes Overseas Ministries, and Home Ministries (Deaf Ministries, Evangelism and Church Development, Health and Welfare, Media Ministries, and Student and Young Adult Services).

The Mutual Aid Board is working at a denominational program to help ensure that physical needs are met in the increasingly urbanized culture where Mennonites find themselves and where older rural patterns are no longer adequate.

The Publication Board continues to carry the heavy responsibility of developing and publishing the materials needed for the nurture of the total church, on all age levels.

The Historical Committee and the Council on Faith, Life and Strategy both work at idea and program, historically and ideally, with critique of the present in the light of the past, and in the light of the potential. Past and present patterns and models for leadership, congregational life, peace education, outreach, and so forth need to be looked at from the perspective of history, but also from the perspective of the current social and world scene.

The associate groups are special-interest groups, with activities related to the concerns of women, and of the Afro-American and Hispanic constituencies, respectively.



Conjoint Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, and the (Old) Mennonite Church, held at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1983. Mary Oyer, leading the singing.



Anabaptist preacher in the 1530s

Concluding Reflections

As the Mennonite Church becomes increasingly urban and complex, it will need to lean heavily upon experienced and trained leaders. In each congregation there will need to be faithful shepherds and a core of persons with dedicated vision. Many perceptive Mennonites agree that if the Mennonite Church is to remain faithful in maintaining its original vision the local congregation will need to be the setting for such fulfillment. However, this needs to be combined with an intra-denominational program which effectively coordinates the program needed to maintain a common faith. Inter-Mennonite and Peace Church cooperation will also become increasingly important in this regard.

A genuine Christian nonconformity need not look like the Mennonite Church nonconformity of the 1920s. The church might well be truer to biblical precept if it takes on more of the sixteenth-century Anabaptist essence of being in the world and yet somehow remaining a distinct and definable people. It will mean reaching out to other Mennonite groups, and indeed to all kindred believers, no matter what may be their human tradition and denominational ties.

May the Mennonite Church—and all Mennonites worldwide—continue in the spirit of the love that Jesus gave to his own, whom he called his friends, brothers and sisters.*

—Leonard Gross

*Originally written in 1978 for the *Mennonite World Handbook*, pp. 358-62. Revised, 1988, as the Historical Committee contribution to the packet of information on the nature of the Mennonite Church, as requested by the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada.

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Slavery and Politics a Century Ago: 1856 and 1860

In looking back on history, we know that the outcome of the 1860 presidential election in the United States had profound effects upon society, especially in regard to slavery. Slavery, although not the only campaign issue, appears to have been the main issue, as the following letters of various Mennonites of that era depict. However, while it seems as if the Mennonites agreed about their abhorrences to slavery, they differed politically.

In the first two letters, Johannes Risser from Ashland County, Ohio, writing to relatives in Europe, explains why the Mennonites with whom he is associated voted for the pro-slavery Democratic party in 1856.

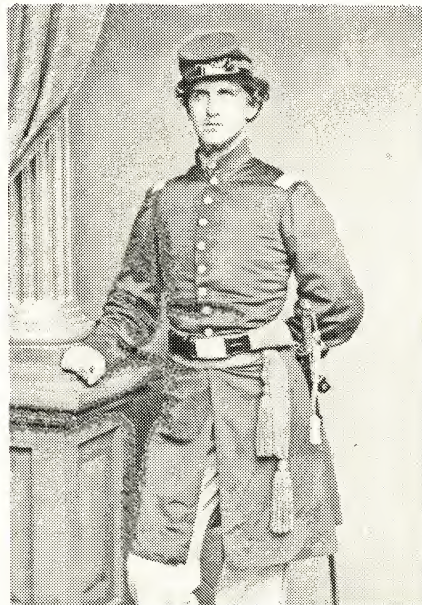
30 March 1857

... Our German people are so firmly and adamantly attached to the Democratic Party that newspaper reporters find it easy to keep the vote favorable to the Democrats, even if the leaders are wrong and act absolutely undemocratically. ... I know of pastors who have preached vigorously and critically against slavery, but who spoke in favor of the Democratic party and voted for it. ... These people did not know and did not want to learn that in this country, if the government is working toward a wrong goal, the party, whatever its name, will continue to pursue that goal. ... People want material wealth; and they want it even if an increase in wealth means spreading slavery even further and further. ...

January 4, 1858

... I considered it the Christian duty of every citizen to work against slavery. ... But win or lose, come what may, I would never cast a vote for the further spread of slavery, for I see in this affair a matter of conscience, as do all our children and relatives. You are no doubt thinking that it can be taken for granted, especially among people who claim to be Christians, that they would vote against slavery. It can also be said that the great majority do think and act in this way. But still not all do so. To arouse your amazement even fur-

ther, I will tell you that, for example, nearly all our Mennonites in Iowa voted for the Democrats, i.e., for the spread of slavery. To understand this you must know that we have a free press, and the degree of lying, calumniating and defaming published in the papers to deceive the people can



The above photo is of Lieutenant Ran. M. Smith of Pennsylvania's 91st regiment, ca. 1861. Smith, a boyhood friend of John F. Funk, volunteered in early 1860, leaving behind his recently wedded wife. The outbreak of the Civil War caused additional dilemmas for the Mennonites. To what extent should they support the fight against the injustices of slavery? Funk, writing in his journal on August 23, 1862, showed his uncertainty at that time about total nonresistance: "I would go just as willingly, as do anything else, if my faith and belief in the justice of violent measures at any time and in any case allowed me to do so. It would be wrong for me to go, before my government compels me to do it." Funk's cousin, Kate, did not like the idea that her brother Martin had volunteered; but after the Confederate army invaded Pennsylvania at Gettysburg on July 1-3, 1863, she began to question her own previous views, as shown in her July 20, 1863 letter to Funk: "I felt thankful that he could sacrifice his own pleasure for his country. I am almost proud of him. It is not wrong, is it?" The Civil War hence became not only a testing of democracy, but also a testing of Mennonites, their own faith and theology.

—J. Kevin Miller

only be comprehended when one has seen and experienced it for a long time. This evil work is carried to extremes especially in presidential elections because our president has so many remunerative offices to give away that the total amounts to many millions, and the president as a rule gives the offices only to people who have worked for his election and have voted for him. Any one who gets and reads only one paper of a political party is deceived, and our Germans, who have not been here very long and make up a large number of voters have in most cases such strong faith in a party bearing the name "Democratic" that they vote for it almost blindly, and many a year will have to pass before they learn that the name is only a name, and that one must take into consideration its principles and performance and not its name. It is possible that the election might have turned out differently if the German church had voted against slavery as decisively as the English. ...*

According to Risser, part of the reason for these Mennonites voting Democratic was due to their recent immigration and their not fully understanding what their vote meant. Conversely, Mennonites who were established in the United States longer, such as in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, would have voted Republican in the 1860 election as the following letters from F. R. Hunsicker to John F. Funk reveal:

June 2, 1860

But I must not forget to inform you what good *Republicans* we are in this part of "Old Bucks." There appears to be but one sentiment. That is, that Lincoln and Hamlin will walk into the Capitol over their opponents as though they were not aware that there are other candidates in the field. There are, no doubt, some Douglas men in our midst, but *who* they are it is almost impossible to determine. They are so quiet that their "silence may almost be heard." Perhaps they are afraid to *commit* themselves, for if Douglas should *not* prove the successful candidate at

Baltimore, the chances of obtaining fat offices under the next Democratic (?) Administration would be considerably endangered by supporting him too vehemently at present. Captain Davis of the *Doylestown Democrat* is the only open advocate of S. A. D.

12 September 1860

We are pretty well one-sided on the subject of politics. There are some Douglasites and some Breckinridgers, half a dozen Bell men and all the rest are "rail splitters." I can not take a ride of three miles from home without seeing some evidence of the Wide-Awakes' presence. They have raised poles with large streamers bearing aloft and swing to the breeze the names of Lincoln and Hamlin. A few miles from this place (at Lahaska) there is a pole standing which bears aloft a maul and four wedges, emblematic of "rail splitting." Our county is *alive* you may depend on it, she will roll up a heavy majority for "honest old Abe." But it is not only in politics that we are moving. There are also moral-reform meetings held, such as temperance, antislavery, etc. On last Sunday I attended a temperance meeting near New Hope, on which occasion forty-five names were added to the large list already appended to the "pledge" of the Bucks County Temperance Association. Religion also seems to be emerging from that chaotic mass of superstitions beneath which it was for so many centuries buried.

A letter from Enos M. Kratz informs Funk on the differences among the youth:

May 20, 1860

. . . The people seem to be divided — a sort of classes, or ranking, it is true — but neither seems to hold any rank superior to the other. Their distinction seems most apparent by noticing their places of amusement or to say the same thing, the manner in which they respectively spend the sabbath. I forgot to say, that attitude applies only to the young folks. To observe this difference, let any one attend some or all of our numerous and well-attended singing schools, and afterwards visit our Sunday

schools, and he will find at the two different places, different people.

The next two letters show some of the emotion displayed among the supporters of the candidates:

September 8, 1860

From A. K. Funk (Hilltown, Pennsylvania)

To J. F. Funk (Chicago)

Dear Brother,

Yours was in due time received; though not without having Lincoln's lithograph on the envelope bedaubed with ink, done I suppose, that he would then look like a *Black* Republican. But beneath that ink-stained brow we still can trace the sterling qualities of a noble soul. He is in possession of a mind and heart, that cannot be *corrupted*, a character that cannot be *stained*, and an integrity that cannot be *soiled* or *defamed* by the unprincipled followers of Modern Democracy. . . . On Monday evening there was a discussion at Leidystown. Dr. Moyer and William Godshalk argued the cause of Lincoln. C. H. Sellers and B. F. Fisher advocated the cause of Douglas. Mr. Fisher eulogized Douglas, by saying, that he (Douglas) stood side by side with the noble and patriotic Henry Clay; and that *he* now advocated the very same principles that Clay advocated in his day, and which formed the groundwork of his accomplished statesmanship. But our speaker clearly showed, and plainly proved the fallacy and inconsistency of their argument, the fraud and corruption of their party, and the vain attempt of *trying* to elect to the presidency a political demagogue like Stephen A. Douglas.

August 28, 1860

From Jacob S. Funk (Hilltown)

To J. F. Funk (Chicago)

. . . Levi H. Markley was elected secretary of the Douglas club and in six days after his election he made a Lincoln speech and is now a Republican. Daniel Sellers . . . , is a radical Douglasite. He recently declared in Philadelphia that John Hickman should be hung; he soon had a party of Lincoln rowdies

around him who told him that *he* ought to be hung for so saying, and finally they told him they would do it too if he would come into some parts of the city.

John F. Funk was an active Republican in Chicago at this time, writing letters and articles. William Thompson, a friend from Alexandria Bay, Michigan, responds to Funk's writings several times, further revealing the emotions of the times:

July 6, 1860

. . . You are a Black Republican of the darkest kind. . . . You call upon the names of your revolutionary fathers when to be consistent you should cite Charles the 1st of England, Benedict Arnold, Aaron Burr, or Gen. William Walker. They were genuine Black Republicans . . . —Black Republicans as represented by "honest Abe" (named the honest to distinguish him from the rest of the party). . . .

March 24, 1860

. . . From you we have a right to expect better things. You were born in a free country, in a country where man in all things right is as free as the wild wind which sweeps your western prairies where all men are equal before God and the laws. . . . Why do you choose to serve the devil instead of coming up boldly to the help of the Lord against the mighty? . . . Tom Paine, the infidel who died a poor miserable drunkard, was the first abolitionist in America. And Voltaire, the crazy French infidel philosopher, was the first one in Europe—worthy leaders of those who have come after them. An abolitionist is a combination of universalist and infidel—a man who in his own estimation thinks he knows more than his creator. It is impossible for a man to be an abolitionist and be a Christian. . . . Is there nothing that can be said to you to awaken you to a realization of the wickedness . . . in the cause of freeing the negroes from their masters? . . .

Despite all this intense emotion, Funk was able to find some humor in politics:

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March 29, 1861
From John F. Funk (Chicago)
To his brother?

. . . We had some wiseheads in the legislative halls of our state last winter. If they truly represent the *combined wisdom* and experience of our state, then woe to Illinois. They passed one law which prohibits any man from driving horse, cattle, or vehicle across any bridge in the state of Illinois under a penalty of five dollars. What on earth they thought bridges were for I can't imagine. I supposed they were all built to drive over on.

These letters have shown the concern and participation of Mennonites in a presidential election that produced great changes in society. Now, a century-and-a-quarter later, we may ask ourselves, how important are the upcoming national elections? Do the issues of 1988 create the possibility of yet another watershed in history?

In this year of national elections, we as Mennonites are honoring the 300th anniversary of a Quaker/Mennonite slavery petition (see July 1987 MHB)—of four men who dared to cry out to church and society against the injustice of slavery, "This is wrong!" It took 175 more years and the tragedy of the Civil War before their plea for the abolishment of slavery was realized. Yet prejudices from the days of slavery still remain and we find ourselves today as a church continuing the efforts of these four men by emphasizing the role of peace and justice—by recognizing injustices we encounter and saying, "This is wrong!"

But, how does all this affect whom we will choose to vote for as our national leaders? Can we learn from history? Will we be like the Mennonites of 1856 whom Risser accused of voting for self-interest (wealth), at the expense of the increased spread of injustices, or like the Mennonites of 1860 who followed their consciences? These are questions we need to ask ourselves as we consider choosing our national leaders—in the United States in 1988, but also in Canada and elsewhere at regular intervals.

—J. Kevin Miller

*The Risser letters, excerpted here, were published in their entirety earlier in the *MHB* (October 1976).

Life and Service of E. M. Yost 1902 - 1983

J. C. Wenger

Peter and Susan Yost of Nebraska had seven children, three daughters and four sons. They were devout members of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite—commonly known as Holdemans. They named their youngest child, a son, Earvey Megli (Megli being the maiden name of the mother). As a mature minister and bishop he was widely known as E. M. The father is No. 29, and the son No. 170 in the huge *Yost Genealogy*, two volumes, 1982, compiled and published by Lyle E. & Erma Yost of Hesston, Kansas. (The volumes are in the Mennonite Historical Library, third floor of the Good Library of Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana.) A few days after E. M. passed away, his fellow-minister, Marcus Bishop, sat down at a typewriter and wrote a page and a half, single-spaced, on bishop Yost. He had read more than once the unfinished biography of E. M. by the onetime pastor of the Prince of Peace Chapel, Aspen, Colorado, with its lovely and impressive pipe organ—a witness which Bishop Yost was deeply concerned to give.

To be a part of the strong Meridian Congregation near Hesston, the Peter Yosts moved from Nebraska to the Hesston area in 1912 when young Earvey M. was but nine years of age. At 17 he was converted and united with the Meridian (Holdeman) Congregation by baptism. The next year he became superintendent of the Sunday school. And at 19 he was ordained as a preacher.

For many years I could not find out the exact date of ordination of Brother Yost. A few years ago I contacted my distant cousin, Harry D. Wenger, the pastor of the Meridian Congregation. In due time he replied that he finally had the date: March 5, 1922, which confirmed his ordination at 19. As a Holdeman minister E. M. of course wore a beard. Pastor Wenger added that he himself was baptized by Minister Yost.

The Holdeman Church has a high ethic on purity of life. They do not believe in courtship. In the course of

time the youngest Holdeman preacher of 19 sent word through a church official, likely a deacon, to Emma Schmidt, 18, that he wanted her to be his wife. She found it hard to marry a man who was as good as a stranger. But they took the plunge. Their union (August 13, 1922) was blessed with a daughter and three sons: 1 Luella, October 4, 1923; 2 Howard S. (for Schmidt), May 24, 1925; 3 Melvin S., March 25, 1927; and 4 Vernon S., October 21, 1928.

In 1932 E. M. was serving as a Holdeman pastor in Greensburg, Kansas, but was somewhat dissatisfied with his denomination. He had C. F. Derstine, a Mennonite Church bishop of Ontario, hold a three-week series of meetings in an auditorium in Greensburg. In the midst of those meetings, (April 1932) E. M. and Emma transferred to the Mennonite Church. The nonresident bishop, Harry A. Diener, assisted by Bishop D. D. Miller of Kansas, were helpful in the transition. Bishop C. F. returned for another series of meetings in September, and by 1933 the Mennonite Church membership, including former Holdemans, had risen to forty. (1932 *Gospel Herald*, p. 185: CFD letter; *South Central Frontiers* by Paul Erb, 1974, pp. 339-344).

When did E. M. Yost become a bishop? Again the *Gospel Herald* to the rescue! On April 24, 1943, J. G. Hartzler and Harry A. Diener, two Kansas bishops, ordained E. M. as a bishop (1943 G H, p. 120). And in 1945 P. M. Friesen of Denver, formerly an India missionary and E. M. Yost of Greensburg, traded locations and churches: Friesen located at Greensburg, where he served as pastor, and Yost accepted the pastorate of First Mennonite Church in Denver. E. M. was active as an evangelist across North America, and as a bishop in Colorado—the congregations of which finally were organized under Yost as the Rocky Mountain Conference in 1961, a daughter of the South Central Conference.

Physically E. M. was a huge man,

powerfully built. He had a very attractive speaking and singing voice, and he was often asked to sing solos in connection with his evangelistic meetings. I can still hear him sing, "Ship Ahoy!"

Brother Yost was also a born leader, able to direct men and women. It was no accident that a host of Mennonite young men found employment in the hospitals and institutions of Denver, for he had arranged for such service with the several institutions involved.

In 1956 he resigned as pastor of the Denver First Mennonite Church—to give himself more fully to bishop and evangelistic duties. He was particularly interested in the Rocky Mountain churches, and was especially concerned to give a gospel witness in Aspen through the Prince of Peace Chapel, with its attractive pipe organ.

Good men and strong leaders also get old! In May 1970 E. M. and Emma finally retired, and entered Schowalter Villa at Hesston, Kansas. Emma suffered a real breakdown in health, and died January 22, 1973. Eventually he too was somewhat of a broken old man. He burned out one car motor after another, was a bit careless with money, and did not always know exactly where he was. In the end he died of pulmonary heart failure, December 16, 1983, in Bethel Hospital, Newton, Kansas, aged 81. Two days later a fitting memorial service was conducted at the Hesston Mennonite Church, and two days after that another service was conducted by his successor, Walter Friesen, at the First Mennonite Church in Denver. His body was tenderly laid to rest in Crown Hill, Denver—until our Lord comes again. E. M. and Emma left four children to mourn their passing, thirteen grandchildren, and seventeen great-grandchildren.

D. H. Bender, the late president of Hesston College, one time playfully referred to Bishop Geo. R. Brunk I as the "tall sycamore of Denbigh." E. M. was the huge brother of Denver! Those who wish to see how he looked may turn to page 340 in Erb's *South Central Frontiers*. May the great Head of the Church continue to raise up those who will lead His Children in paths of holiness and peace!

An Old Writing on the Woman's Covering

James W. Lowry

Beginning with New Testament times Christian women have covered their heads for prayer or public worship.¹ This was generally the practice in all church groups until the last century or so. The conservative Mennonites, the Amish, and the Hutterites continue to maintain this practice, whereas generally churches have given up the practice as part of the secularization of modern Western society. When secularizing pressures came to bear on the Mennonites in America, church leaders began discussing and teaching this practice in order to maintain it. They developed new terminology and applied it to what had in German been previously called the "Kapp."² The new terms which came out of the so-called "Great Awakening" of the Mennonite Church were "prayer-head-covering,"³ "devotional covering,"⁴ etc., but it was the same old practice based on I Corinthians 11:1-16 distinguishing Christian women from those of worldly society.

Special terms were not developed earlier and references to the woman's "Kapp" are rare in early Mennonite literature because it was not an especially Mennonite or Anabaptist practice that needed defense.⁵ But as Western society moved farther and farther from its nominally Christian heritage, churches needed to decide whether they would maintain the New Testament practice or not. Among those churches that were heirs of the Anabaptist heritage with its emphasis on the New Testament and willingness to obey even the hard sayings of that book and to make a clean cut with the worldly culture around them, it was obvious that this practice ought to be maintained.

Some have claimed that the woman's covering was not mentioned among Mennonites before the middle of the nineteenth century.⁶ Hence the writing by Pieter Jansz Twisck, translated in this article, has special interest. The date of its composition is not known, but it was before his death in 1636.

Twisck was born in 1565 at Hoorn in the Netherlands, became a

preacher there in 1592, and later was chosen elder.⁷ He belonged to the Old Frisian Mennonite Church, one of the most conservative groups among the Mennonites of Holland.⁸ In addition to his duties as minister and his work in his dry goods shop, he wrote voluminously. Probably the most important of the writings attributed to him is the thirty-three article confession of faith found in the *Martyrs' Mirror*. He did not write this confession himself, but it expressed his beliefs. Other important books for which he bears the full responsibility are *Concordantie der Heyligher Schrifturen* (*Concordance of Holy Scriptures*), *Bybelsch Naem - ende Chronyck-Boeck* (*Biblical Name and Chronicle Book*), and *Chroniick van den Ondergagh der Tyrannen* (*Chronicle of the Fall of Tyrants*). Some of his books, of which there are more than 26, circulated only in handwritten copies before his death.⁹

The translation below is taken from an interesting book of his, called *Schriftuerlijcke Vereeniging* (*Scripture Harmonization*).¹⁰ Its first known publication was in 1661 by Twisck's grandson and successor in church leadership. Although the grandson, whose name was the same (Pieter Jansz de Jonge), was very true to Twisck's principles, it is said that he did not possess his grandfather's intellect. Perhaps if Twisck himself had seen this book through publication, he would have smoothed out some of the thought.

Nevertheless, the *Scripture Harmonization* is a very interesting book. In it Twisck takes passages of Scripture which seem to contradict each other, sets them side by side, and explains the harmony between them. It contains 800 short essays of this type and is around 500 pages long.

In the pair of Scriptures given below Twisck deals with statements that a woman should be covered when she prays or prophesies and that a woman should keep silence in church. The main point under consideration is when a woman is to keep silence and when to teach. It is assumed without argument that the woman's head is to be covered.

Harmonization¹¹

I Corinthians 11:5

"But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head."

I Corinthians 14:34

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it not permitted unto them to speak, but to be under obedience."

We can take the first statement (about a woman who prays or prophesies) to mean an *inward* prayer, supplication, prophesying, or speaking before the Lord, which women may not do in the assembly as men with uncovered heads, but rather should do with covered heads. Then the first statement does not conflict with the second statement which forbids the woman public teaching or prophesying.

But if these words, "prays or prophesies," mean "to express vocal, spoken, or audible prayer, prophesying, or teaching before the assembly" (where the speaking can easily be understood), then there is greater difficulty. Then it would seem that a woman should prophesy or teach in the assembly with a covered head (and not like the men with uncovered heads.) But no! Such a conclusion does not follow. If Paul forbids the one, he does not [necessarily] forbid the other to be good.

With both statements, however, he wants to teach the woman subjection to men and that the woman should not make herself equal to men because they are placed as head over her. So, from these two statements of the Apostle, we are to learn that women should not present before the church any open form of prayer, or any prophetic instruction, which belongs to the office of teaching.

However this is not to exclude her in the social community from all testimony, statement of opinion, and useful discussion, nor is this to hinder good teaching. On this matter Paul speaks very differently [although he does say], "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." I Timothy 2:11-12. Nevertheless we see that Paul does not want to forbid the woman the office of instructing her household or of

governing it in a godly manner (I Timothy 5:4) or of being a good teacher: [for example, he says that] the aged women should teach the younger women virtue (Titus 2:3) in order to show supportive and submissive or resigned help with readiness and honor to the men. But Paul wants only to forbid the woman that which comes up in the office of teaching [under certain circumstances] because the position or calling where God has placed her to be submissive or subject does not belong [with teaching under those circumstances]. For the office of teaching requires a certain power and a higher authority and prestige in addition to other requisites.

Notes:

1 Mennonite Encyclopedia, s.v. "Prayer Veiling," by John C. Wenger.

2 *Herald of Truth* (Elkhart, Ind.) "To the young sister," January 1866, p. 5, as quoted in Melvin Gingerich, *Mennonite Attire through Four Centuries*. Publication of The Pennsylvania German Society, Vol. 4 (Breinigsville, Pa.: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1970), p. 130.

3 Daniel Kauffman, *Manual of Bible Doctrines* (Elkhart, Ind.: Mennonite Publishing Co., 1898), p. 160ff.

4 Daniel Kauffman, ed., *Bible Doctrine* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1914), p. 416ff.

5 Gingerich, *Mennonite Attire*, pp. 122-123, 126.

6 Donald B. Kraybill, "Mennonite Woman's Veiling: the Rise and Fall of a Sacred Symbol," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, LX1 (1987), 301.

7 *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, s.v. "Pieter Jansz Twisck, der Aeltere," by N. van der Zijpp.

8 Archie Penner, "Pieter Jansz Twisck — Second Generation Anabaptist/Mennonite Churchman, Writer and Polemicist" (Ph. D. diss., University of Iowa, 1971), p. 386.

9 *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Pieter Jansz Twisck" and "Pieter Jansz Twisck (Pieter Jansz de Jonge)," both by N. van der Zijpp.

10 Pieter Jansz Twisck, *Schriftuerlijcke Vereeniginghe*. Ofte korte verklaringe en overeenbrenginge van veel strijdigh-schijnende Spreucken, often verscheyden Passagien der Heyliger Schriftuere, dewelcke schijnen teghen malkander te strijden ende nochtans/ elck in sijn rechte sin ghenomen/ niet strijdigh en zijn (Scripture Harmonization, Or a Brief Explanation and Harmonization of Many Seemingly Opposing Verses, Or, Again, Various Passages of Holy Scripture, which Appear to Contradict Each Other, Yet Taken in Their Correct Sense Are Not Contrary) (Hoorn: Pieter Zachariasz. Harteveldt, 1661), p. 371. This is number 4209 in the *Mennonite Bibliography 1631-1961* by Nelson P. Springer and A.J. Klassen (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1977).

11 This was translated with help from Richard Olivier of Voorschoten in the Netherlands.

The Ancient Cavern

David Beachy, a Goshen College senior majoring in history, took his practicum work experience at the Archives of the Mennonite Church. During the eighty hours he spent there, he accessioned several collections, including materials from the Mennonite Publishing House's Book Division (Maynard Shetler's correspondence). Below is a summary of his experience.

—Leonard Gross

Working in an archives has been like digging in a mine containing precious jewels. One continually uncovers stones which sparkle with unique brilliance.

It is self-evident that a Mennonite archives preserves the history of the Mennonite Church. It captures to a certain extent the vicarious experience of Mennonite life lived scores of years ago. The archives open windows into the daily life of many of the men and women of the past who shaped the church of today. Materials for historical research projects and biographies are made easier to locate and study. Through my short time of work, I have gained a much broader perspective of Mennonite life in North America. I have seen many of the changes which have occurred as well as issues which were confronted. As an example, the Mennonite Publishing House, the voice of the Mennonite Church, had to deal with Amish/Mennonite relations before Ken Reed's book, *Amish Soldier*, was released. The whole debate was in my hands through the letters written from both sides, as well as other members of the Mennonite Church. I could study both points of view and understand their real feelings.

Wisdom and insight about life can be readily discovered in archival collections. More than a novel with fictionalized characters, studying the lives, decisions, and responses of real people is at once both realistic in its portrayal of life and instructive. Many gain wisdom only after experiencing grief and sorrow from wrong choices in life. The archives can offer an alternative. I learned to know Dorothy Hamilton and Paul Erb through reading what they wrote, what they did, and what others wrote to them and about them. I feel I know many of their motivations, their decisions, their outlook on life, and what

the outcome was. Many other lives have been placed categorically in folders, which will prove to be a continual challenge and inspiration to future generations.

—David Beachy

Book Reviews

Bomberger: Lancaster County Roots 1722-1986. Pp. 232. \$15.00 plus \$2.50 handling.

This volume contains the genealogical records of the two sons of Christian Bomberger, a 1722 immigrant from southern Germany to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. There are 2,800 names indexed with each descendent listed receiving a number that corresponds to the order of birth. This allows for easily tracing roots as well as future additions. However, this is more than a genealogical record; it is also a history. Eighty-eight pages of story and pictures enrich this volume with accounts of people, places, and events. Order from Mrs. Barbara N. Miller, 229 Main Street, Landisville, PA 17538.

The Beachy Amish Mennonite Fellowship Churches. By Elmer S. Yoder. Hartville, OH 44632: Diakonia Ministries, 3511 Edison NE., 1987. 443 pp. Limpbound. \$11.00 plus \$1.20 postage and handling.

In looking at the descendants of the Radical Reformation, and after learning of the major subdivisions known as Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterites, one can then also enter into the realm of the subgroups. The story of one such group is told here with commendable detail and clarity, consisting of over 100 congregations and nearly 7,000 members.

Author Yoder is not a member of the Beachy Amish Mennonite Fellowship but does have roots there. He tells the story with a great deal of maturity and objectivity, having served thirty years in the ministry of the Conservative Mennonite Conference both as minister and bishop. He has taught a total of thirty-two years in both elementary and high schools, and has served on the boards of four Christian schools representing four different levels of education — elementary, secondary, Bible insti-

tute, and college. He furthermore edits the Conservative Conference periodical, *Brotherhood Beacon*, and is chairman of the Conference's Historical Committee. He has written several published local histories as well.

The Beachy Amish Mennonite Fellowship stands between the more conservative Old Order Amish on the one side and the somewhat more liberal Conservative Mennonite Conference on the other. They have meetinghouses, automobiles, electricity, modern farm machinery, phonographs and tape recorders, but no radios or television sets. They have largely turned to the use of the English language in their services and they are active in support of missions and mutual aid. Beards among adult males and cape dresses and black stockings for women still prevail.

Yoder endeavors to correct the record in that too many liberties have been taken in the past in loosely ascribing the origin of the Beachy churches to secondary matters such as automobiles or the Sunday school. The practice of strict shunning (Strenghe Meidung in German) has been an issue in the founding of some congregations, but most of the present Beachy Amish congregations were begun for other reasons.

The Beachy Amish congregations do exhibit and nourish a warm piety and they do represent a deliberate nonconformity to modern society in many ways. It remains to be seen whether their particular combination of openness to technology and a conservative piety will prove viable in the long run, or whether they will tend more and more toward the life and practice of the more predominant Mennonites.

—Gerald C. Studer

Mennonite Confession of Faith.

Irvin B. Horst, editor. Lancaster, Pa.: Lancaster Historical Society, 1988. Pp., 80. \$10.50 in hardback and \$7.50 in paper plus \$1.00 postage and handling for either edition.

North American Mennonites have waited for 356 years and at least 255 editions in five languages, before a truly complete translation of the classic Dordrecht Confession would be published in English. Perhaps the innocent presumption in entitling this book *Mennonite Confession of Faith*,

as though there have not been numerous others, is pardonable in light of the high esteem and long preference for the Confession of Faith.

The Christian Church generally, and the Mennonite Church particularly, is in debt to the meticulous scholarship of Irvin B. Horst for this new rendering of this most widely and consistently used delineation of the Mennonite faith. He has been a connoisseur of rare Anabaptist/Mennonite books for many years and had taught Mennonite history in America for 10 years before accepting the invitation of the University of Amsterdam to join the faculty there where he then taught for 18 years.

Peace Agreement is an unusual way to think or speak of a Confession of Faith but it is nevertheless necessary to notice that this is the way the Preface to this document speaks of these articles. This title calls forth the historical context of disunity that prevailed for many years among the Dutch Mennonite congregations prior to 1632 when this Confession was written in an effort to heal the conflict. (Not incidentally, it is this Preface and the concluding statement which had never before been translated into English.)

As Amos B. Hoover says in his Foreword, this confession has served two rather disparate purposes, namely, on the one hand, "to inform their governments about their faith . . ." and also to serve "as a handbook for . . . (the instruction of) newcomers to the faith." Since the earliest migrations of Mennonites to these shores, this confession has been the most commonly used statement of faith in the New World and was indeed the "textbook" of this reviewer's preparation for church membership in 1939. It is still used by conservative groups such as the Old Order Amish and the Old Order Mennonites and subsequent confessions for the Mennonites have consistently alluded to it as the "north star" of all revisions down to the current one of 1963. Van Braght in his monumental *Martyrs' Mirror* published in 1660 believed that this confession set forth the Apostles' doctrine.

Editor/translator Horst has written a most enlightening Introduction in which he provides much valuable data regarding this confession's early use and provenance. Only when the

conservative Old Flemish wing and the more progressive Young Flemish wing were willing to acknowledge their mistakes and ask for mutual forgiveness was unity restored. Horst raises the intriguing question, after noting that twice this Agreement is spoken of as "our Brotherly Union," whether this may be an allusion to the so-called Schleithem Confession of 1527, for that first confession was also an attempt at restoring unity. So great was the euphoria over the newly attained unity that in Haarlem a new hymnbook was compiled and published in celebration of the event.

This rendering is not a paraphrase but a direct translation. Horst has at times shortened the sentences though he has retained the paragraphing. A Brief Bibliography is provided plus the reproduction here in facsimile reprint of the only known copy of the 1633 first published edition. Then follows the List of Editions with several introductory paragraphs. All is bound in a handsome hardbound volume with a gold-lettered title.

—Gerald C. Studer

The Amish in America: Settlements that Failed, 1840-1960. By David Luthy. Aylmer, Ont./Lagrange, In.: Pathway Publishers, 1986. Pp., 555. \$16.00 postpaid.

The seed of which this book is the fruit was planted in 1971 when the history of one of many extinct Amish settlements first appeared as an article in Pathway Publishers' magazine *Family Life*. As the years passed and other extinct settlements' histories were published, the thought occurred to revise them, add others, and publish them all in a single volume. This is the fulfillment of this vision.

It turns out that this book contains the histories of exactly 100 settlements which existed within the 120-year period indicated by the title. This admittedly does not contain the histories of the earliest settlements founded in the 1700s in southeastern Pennsylvania because the research of these is far more difficult and less than adequately clear at this time.

Most of the settlements included here were Old Order Amish while others were founded before the term "Old Order" came into use. These were "Amish" or (later) "Amish-Mennonite." This book does not contain the histories of any extinct Amish-Mennonite settlements whose

founding dates occurred after the division into Old Order Amish and Amish-Mennonite groups. The total of such settlements in North America recorded here represent 31 states and Mexico, of which Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Ohio have the greatest number.

The book is of large format measuring 8 ½ by 11 inches and is illustrated by pictures, not of people, but only of sale bills, maps, tombstones, and buildings as one would expect in a book published by the Old Order Amish.

Upon receiving this book, I turned at once to the Smithville, Ohio, settlement since this is the place of my own birth and youth. In this article I learned of The Baptism Controversy which developed when an unmarried Mennonite emigrant requested membership with the Amish of Mifflin County, Pa., and was refused unless he would agree to rebaptism. He refused and instead migrated on to Wayne Co., Ohio, where he was accepted without rebaptism. Conscientious attempts were made by the Amish bishops to effect a reconciliation of the differences between these two Amish settlements but to no avail until many years later when a compromise was agreed upon.

The histories regularly include such items as the above, along with brief mention of the ministers that served the area and any noteworthy developments that characterized each community. Author Luthy and Pathway Publishers are to be commended for this significant contribution to their own history and that of the wider Anabaptist family.

—Gerald C. Studer

Salem's First Century: Worship and Witness, 1886 to 1986. By James O. Lehman. Salem Mennonite Church, 1986. Pp., 235. Paperback.

This book deals with the history of the Salem Mennonite Church (Kidron, Ohio). However, it is much more than a chronological account of events and issues. There are many themes that run throughout the book. Two of these are suggested in the book's title—worship and witness. A third that stands out is an openness for freedom of thought and expression. This is most evident in the chapter concerning World War II and the varying responses to the

traditional Mennonite peace stance.

The author's extensive research of records and people's recollections enable him to look at a variety of viewpoints and to suggest the way of Salem's history. The effect of the secular society is considered along with that of the religious community. Furthermore, the author attempts to evaluate as if a contemporary of the events, yet with the perspective of history that time has permitted.

—J. Kevin Miller

The Amish Drawings of Florence Starr Taylor. Text by David Graybill. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1987. Pp. 96. \$12.95.

Florence Starr Taylor is a Lancasterian, having spent all but four of her 83 years in this area that has the second-largest Amish community in North America. (It is surpassed only by Holmes County, Ohio.) She is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Art. For the past three decades she has been an artist for the museum on the campus of Franklin and Marshall College. In 1986, she received the Red Rose Award, Lancaster's highest honor. She continues to be active in pastels.

The 70 pencil and pen-and-ink sketches reproduced here give the reader glimpses of Amish work, home and social life as well as scenes of the countryside in which these people live. It is evident as one pursues this collection that the Amish hold a particular fascination for this artist. With them she shares a deep skepticism about the "benefits" of development that turns rich farmlands into shopping malls and apartment complexes. Perhaps it is my identification with this skepticism plus the vigor and genuineness of these drawings that draws me to these vignettes of these people. The only other drawings that even approach these were those of Sybil Gould in Wm. Schreiber's book published in 1962.

Many of these drawings are unfinished, yet this very fact draws the sympathetic viewer into the scene and gives it directness and energy. It is an overdue discovery that this artist's work did not come to public attention until a handful of her drawings were included in a larger show in 1986. They attracted the attention of Ron Ettelman who arranged two subsequent exhibits and now, at age 83,

a book contract.

I recommend this visual introduction to an utterly different manner of life and set of values to all who sense the vacuousness of the prevailing life-style.

—Gerald C. Studer

Elizabeth Horsh Bender, 1895-1988 In Appreciation

On March 24, 1988, Elizabeth Horsch Bender died, in her home, at Goshen Indiana. She was born February 7, 1895, and married Harold S. Bender on May 9, 1923. (Photo, taken on her ninetieth birthday.)



MHB readers will recall the series of "Conversations with Elizabeth Bender" that were incorporated into these pages in 1985 and 1986. We hope to publish more conversations of this type, for Elizabeth Bender still has much to give in way of conversations taped in the early 1980s that will help us interpret Mennonitism since the turn of the century.

Elizabeth Bender, from 1970, almost to the time of her death, was a staff person for the Historical Committee, working out of her home which was just across the street from the Archives of the Mennonite Church. She transcribed old German

materials and translated into English the same, by the thousands of pages. She edited hundreds of manuscripts as well, adding the beauty of language to everything she laid her hands upon.

For these and many other reasons,

Elizabeth Bender will continue to make her mark, as a loving and faithful disciple—a person who to her last continued as a strong contributor to the ongoing life and thought-processes of the Mennonite Church.

—Leonard Gross

John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest Report

1986-87

Class I (Graduate and Seminary)

- First:** (Tie between) "From *Amisch* Mennoniten to Amish *Mennonites*: A Clarion Call in Wright County, Iowa, 1892-1910," by Steven Dale Reschly (University of Iowa) and
"The Influence of Feminist Consciousness upon the Mennonite Church from 1966 to 1986," by Sheila Klassen Wiebe (AMBS).
- Second:** (Tie between) "The Amish Educational System Seen Through *The Blackboard Bulletin*: Maintenance of a Minority's Identity?," by Nathalie Delval (University of Paris) and
"Mennonite Non-Resistance From Menno Simons to the *Selbstschutz*," by Gary Yamasaki (AMBS).
- Third:** (Tie between) "Motives of Famine Relief to Russia," by Janeen Bertsche Johnson (AMBS) and
"Education and Reform in Franconia Conference and the Russian Mennonite Colonies (1789-1870)," by John F. Lapp (AMBS).

Class II (College Juniors and Seniors)

- First:** (Tie between) "The Conservative Spirit of Progress and the Elkhart Institute," by Richard Beyler (Goshen College) and
"Jacob A. Showalter, Mennonite Millionaire: The Man, Means, and Method That Built a Philanthropic Monument," Gail Marie Goering (Bethel College).
- Second:** (Tie between) "Original Visions and Modern Distortions: Resistance, Optimism and the 'Two Kingdoms' According to Menno Simons," by Jim Stutzman (Bluffton College) and
"Expression in Richardsonian Romanesque: Proudfoot and Bird's Administration Building at Bethel College," by Brent J. Zerger (Bethel College).
- Third:** (Tie between) "A Look at the Mennonite Church's Agencies," by Michael Bauman (Goshen College) and
"Edmund George Kaufman: Atonement and Ethics," by Kristel Shutt James (Bluffton College).

Class III (College Freshmen and Sophomores)

- First:** "The Hutterian Experience in World War I," by Chris Zimmerman (Goshen College).
- Second:** (Tie Between) "Mutual Aid in a Modern Society," by Beth Hege (Bethel College), and
"War Taxes: To Pay Or Not To Pay?" by Greg Wilson (Bluffton College).
- Third:** "The Place of Belief and Tradition in Mennonite Society," by Miriam Swope (Youngstown State University).

Class IV (High School)

- First:** "Three Steps My Family and I Can Take Now to Encourage Peace," by Sonia K. Weaver (Bluffton High School).
- Second:** "Clayton Kratz," by Tom Meyer (Central Christian High School).

Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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No. 3

The Manitoba Mennonites in 1883: A Description

In the spring and summer of 1883, W. Henry Barneby, with two others, toured parts of western North America. He carefully maintained a journal during the trip, with a view to publishing an account of the experiences in due time. In his Preface, Barneby writes:

"Our object was not only to enjoy a pleasant trip and to see as much as we conveniently could of a new country, but also to collect as much information as possible, more especially as regards farming and emigration, in the hope of thus being able to assist those in England who might be thinking of seeking a new home across the Atlantic. There was a kind of unwritten agreement among us, that whatever information we might be able to procure should, in one form or another, subsequently be made available to those interested in the subject"

The volume, published in 1884 (Second Edition), is entitled: Life and Labour in the Far, Far West: Being Notes of a Tour in the Western States, British Columbia, Manitoba, and the North-West Territory. Chapter 24, "Among the Mennonites," is subtitled: "Pembina — Rosenfeld — The Mennonites — Victims of Slander — How They Live — Their Gardens — Their Modes of Farming and of Settlement" (pp. 357-69). The text is herewith reproduced in its entirety. (The spelling of the names, presented in the text as being Mennonite, has been maintained as in the original.)

A word of deep appreciation is due to Ivan W. Brunk, Colorado Springs, Colorado, for finding this unusually perceptive source in the first place, and for sending a copy of the text for use in the MHB.

—Leonard Gross

CHAPTER XXIV

Among the Mennonites

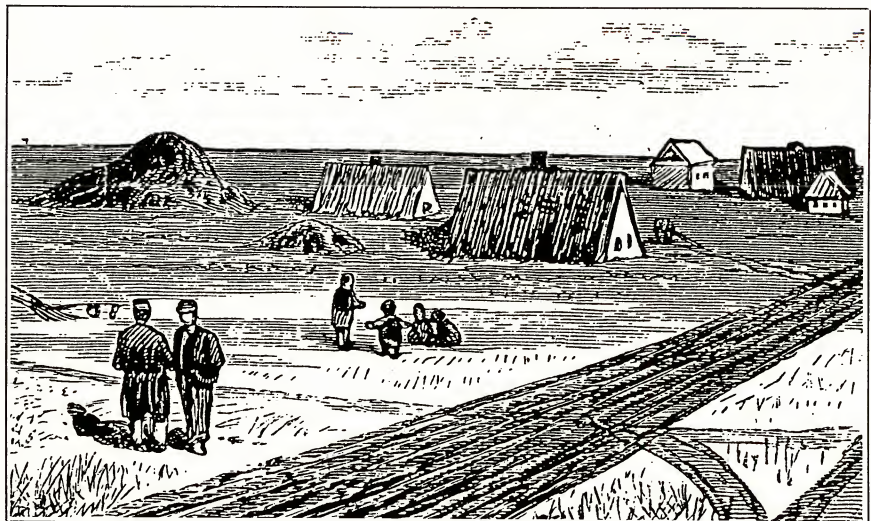
We left Manitoba City at 8.15 a.m. on Monday, August 6th. At first the land was all grass, lying rather low, but flat and open, and with a good deal of scrub-wood: I

should think the best use to make of it would be as a cattle range. We again saw most beautiful prairie flowers, growing in masses on each side of the line. After the first ten miles the land did not look so good as that we had seen round Manitoba City. The railway track was terribly out of order, and our car swung and rolled about, almost as much as if we had been crossing the Atlantic. About ten o'clock the appearance of the country changed, for we came to the first Mennonite village settlement.

These people are emigrants from Russia, though I believe they were originally of German extraction. In accordance with their religious tenets they refused to serve in the army, or to fight, being "men of peace"; the Russian Government therefore gave them ten years in which to seek a new home. This clemency is now cancelled, but thousands had previously availed themselves of the chance, and, under good guidance, many settled here, others going to the States. Their settlements are always in the form of small villages or commun-

ities; and they have apparently been well-advised both in their selection of a locality and in their choice of particular lands, for they occupy some of the finest land in the Red River Valley, where the depth of the soil is fully three feet or more, and too good and rich to require manuring for many years to come. Six townships—i.e., thirty-six miles square—were accorded them in this part, about the year 1871-2. Within this area they have built themselves seventy-five villages, each of which contains from ten or twelve to twenty-five farms. How many Mennonites there may be altogether in Manitoba I cannot tell, it is said that there are in all one hundred villages; 14,000 fresh emigrants came over only five years ago, but at the present time the permission for others to leave Russia has been withdrawn.

We had two or three hours to wait at Pembina junction, and, noticing one of these Mennonite villages (that of Rosenfeld) only about a couple of miles away, we determined to walk over there and pay a visit to its in-



Russian Mennonite settlement in the 1870s.

habitants. We had been told that they were bad settlers, unpleasant neighbours, and dirty in their persons and dwellings; but we were much pleased to find that the exact reverse was the truth; and my notes will tend to show that other settlers have much to learn from them, both in their method of working the land, and in the general form of settlement which they adopt. I certainly consider their system of farming better than any I had previously noticed, and their crops the best I had seen; but, whether from belonging to a different nationality, or from the exclusive nature of their communities, the fact remains that they are not popular with the ordinary settlers. In coming up the line we had seen some five-and-twenty of their villages, situated at almost equal distances apart, on the perfectly flat level plain; but perhaps a description of the one we visited will sufficiently show what the others are like, for I assume that there would be a certain amount of uniformity in them all. The form of the village is generally a broad prairie street dividing two lines of houses, each with a very large and beautifully-cultivated garden attached, stocked with every description of what we should call old-fashioned flowers, and an abundance of vegetables.

The homesteads are very picturesque, being, as nearly as possible, exact copies of the inhabitants' old Russian homes; a very few are built entirely of wood, but most of them had wood-framing, plastered and whitewashed at the base, the two gable ends being of wood, and surmounted by a thatched roof.

The living-room, stable, cow-house, and waggon-house all join, communicating throughout with doors; but the pigs have, as a rule, a separate establishment to themselves outside. Over the whole building (living-house, stable, &c.) there is one large open loft which forms a kind of granary, and serves every sort of purpose, being not only a store-

room, but a general receptacle for everything, whether because not wanted downstairs, or as requiring shelter. The first house we visited stood back out of the line, and a little apart from the others; on entering it we found the owner, with his mother-in-law, wife, and child, all seated at a table with a tin dish of milk and sour-kroot before them; this constituted their dinner; they were all eating out of the common dish, though, happily, with separate spoons.

The floor of the room was partly earth, and partly neatly boarded, and a ladder communicated with the loft above. The earthen floor formed, as it were, the parlour of the establishment, the boarded portion being used as the dairy, and for the various utensils not in immediate use, which were ranged here on little wooden forms, or small square tables. The buckets were generally placed in threes, and many of the other utensils appeared to have special forms allotted to them, and were placed three or four in a row. All was clean and perfectly neat; indeed, it was more like a show-house at an exhibition than an ordinary dwelling-room. There were but few copper utensils, but those I saw were quite bright inside, with their outsides as black as ink. In the windows stood neat little pots of

flowers and prairie roses.

Opening out of this combined room (in which the difference in the flooring was the only distinction) were two bedrooms, separated by a boarded partition with a curtain drawn across. The family treasures, consisting of china, glass, spoons, &c., were kept in one of the bedrooms, on shelves in a window opening into the sitting-room. Thus the contents of the room could be seen on both sides; and we noticed an old Dutch clock against the wall, also a silver watch and chain hung up as a grand ornament.

There were in the rooms two wooden beds, a crib and a very large oak case; a table with a pile of winter blankets, and what we should call eider-down quilts, and a couple of stools, completed the furniture. The curtains to the bedroom-windows were closed. The oven opened out of the bedroom; from the sitting room passed an open chimney, which acted partly as an escape for the smoke from the stove below, and partly as a ventilator.

Under the same roof, and communicating by a door, were the stable, cowhouse, &c.; and I think it is very possible owing to this arrangement that the report has been spread that these Mennonites are such dirty



Typical house-barn combination of the Russian Mennonites. Immigrants continuing the Russian threshing tradition in North America.

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Historical Association. **Editor:** Leonard Gross; **Assistant Editor:** J. Kevin Miller; **Book Review Editor:** Gerald C. Studer; **Production and Design:** Carl Lind; **Associate Editors:** Rafael Falcón, Jan Gleysteen, Merle Good, Amos B. Hoover, Albert N. Keim, James O. Lehman, Winifred Paul, Steven D. Reschly, Sam Steiner, Wilmer Swope, Carolyn C. Wenger, and J. C. Wenger. Dues for regular membership (\$5), contributing membership (\$10-50), supporting membership (\$50-100), sustaining membership (\$100-250), and sponsoring membership (\$250 and above) per year may be sent to the editor. (Library rate: \$5 per year.) Articles and news items should be addressed to the editor, 1700 S. Main Street, Goshen, Indiana 46526 (Tel. 219/535-7477).

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One Hundred Years Ago: Outsiders Look at Mennonites

This issue of the MHB brings together two, contrasting insights into the North American Mennonite world a hundred years ago. The first has to do with recent Russian Mennonite immigrants to Manitoba; the second, with a legal matter within Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonitism. Both vignettes are based upon astute observations of "outsiders," sympathetic, to be sure, and trained in their respective fields of endeavor: (social) geography and agriculture on the one hand, and the laws of human nature on the other.

The past can indeed inform the present. There are profound insights in these items that again need to be brought to our attention, a century after the fact.

—Leonard Gross

people, living under the same roof as their animals. For my part, I must say I do not think it is at all a bad arrangement, but, on the contrary, very suitable to the climate, for it enables the owners to get to the stock without having to go out of doors; and, as far as I could ascertain, the plan was not open to objection on the score of want of cleanliness.

After seeing the house, we next went to visit the garden. This we found was beautifully kept, and well filled with vegetables and flowers of every variety. The following is a list which I give in the order that I took the names down in my note-book:—

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Potatoes. | 22. Rhubarb |
| 2. Sunflowers. | 23. China Aster. |
| 3. Poppies. | 24. Mignonette. |
| 4. Nasturtiums. | 25. Caraway seed. |
| 5. Pinks. | 26. Sweet Briar. |
| 6. Beans. | 27. Manitoba Cherry. |
| 7. Currants. | 28. Swedes. |
| 8. Sweetwilliam. | 29. Hollyhock. |
| 9. Pansy. | 30. Peas. |
| 10. Beetroot. | 31. Horse Radish. |
| 11. Onions. | 32. Vegetable Marrow. |
| 12. Indian Pink. | 33. Cucumber. |
| 13. Scarlet Star. | 34. Camomile. |
| 14. Marigold. | 35. Water Melon |
| 15. Gooseberry. | (which does not grow well). |
| 16. Lettuce. | 36. Balsam. |
| 17. Carrots. | 37. Roses. |
| 18. French Beans. | 38. Portulaca. |
| 19. Wild Gooseberry. | |
| 20. Sage. | |
| 21. Sour Krout. | |

The sunflower seed came direct from Russia. The vegetable garden was in the centre, and the flower gardens formed the borders, in the same manner as one may see any day in old-fashioned English gardens. The second house that we visited was much the same as the one I have just described, and everything was equally in order. The only difference in the

garden was the addition of plum and dwarf mulberry-trees, also of cottonwood and poplar. The two latter were eventually to be planted out, and, in the end, to be used for firing. The potato crop here was exceedingly good.

The third house we went to belonged to the "boss" of the village; and was an exact imitation, in wood, of a Russian house. In this garden we found, besides the vegetables and flowers enumerated above, some wild hops, Scotch kale, very fine cabbages, and a few apple-trees; but these latter do not grow well in Manitoba. The flowers were, in every case, beautiful and well-grown; the vegetables, on the whole, were also very good and creditable, the potatoes, in particular, being excellent. The name of our guide was Peter Zorokarriors, that of the proprietor of the second house was Abram Zacharis, and that of the "boss" of the village was David Klason. They were all most friendly, and followed us about, every one being anxious to show us their homes and gardens, so we soon had the majority of the village walking about with us. Their knowledge of the English language was not very great; but their anxiety to be friendly and to show us everything fully made up for this, and we managed to understand each other pretty well.

The oldest settler in this village has been here eight years. With regard to the farming of the Mennonite community, they have some excellent land, a part of the Red River Valley; in fact, it is some of the best in Manitoba, excepting, perhaps, that immediately adjoining the river. Upon examining the crops, I found

some very good, though weedy, wheat (the best that I have seen in Manitoba); the oats were also good, and cleaner. The soil seemed almost too strong and rich, and inclined to make too much straw. These crops were the result after six years' continuous wheat-growing, with the exception of one year's fallowing. I noticed here a small field of mown barley, which is the first crop I have seen ripe and cut in Manitoba. The settlers told us that, after four years' cropping, they had found the land had become too weedy and dirty; so they now adopt the following rotation, the first year, of course, having been devoted to breaking and backsetting. After that,

Second year, Wheat.

Third year, Wheat.

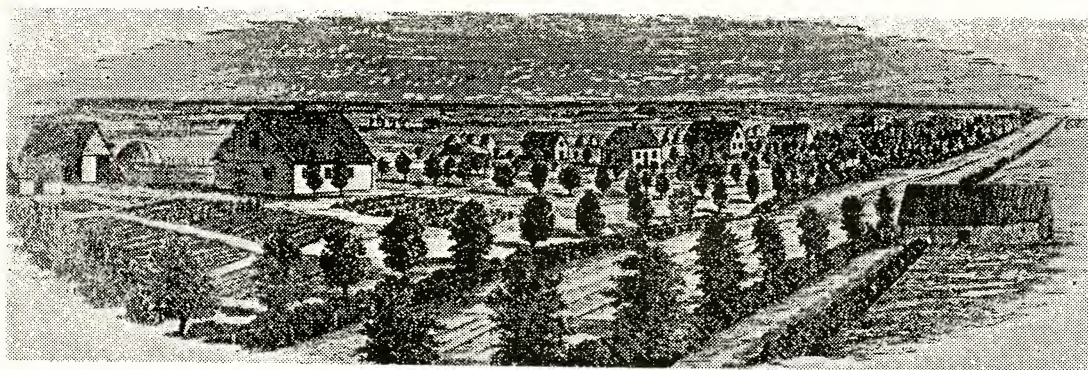
Fourth year, Oats.

Fifth year, Wheat.

Sixth year, Fallow.

This last they call the "black year." Thus it will be seen that they adopt the principle of fallowing every fifth year. It must be remembered that (in this part of the Red River Valley) the soil is three feet deep, and manuring would as yet probably make the land too rich, therefore I think the fallowing system is the best to adopt here for the present; all the same, I think it will eventually be found that it must be resorted to oftener, and that only to fallow every fifth year leaves too long an interval between. At any rate, however, these Mennonite settlers have commenced a regular system of fallowing, which other settlers in Manitoba have as yet failed to do; for the only idea of the latter (as I have said before) as far as I could see, was to crop as often and as hard as they could: they will learn by experience that this plan will not answer. In the Mennonite settlement I saw one field of wheat which had been cropped for seven years in succession; it looked bad, thin, and foul, and this could not be the fault of the soil, for nothing could exceed its richness. Wheat was apparently cultivated more than anything else; after this came oats; but there was very little barley, and what there was was indifferent, while the wheat and oats, when properly cultivated, were excellent.

I also noticed a small patch of swedes, which were fairly good, but small, considering the time of year.



Eastern half of a typical Russian Mennonite village (Gnadenau, Kansas), in 1878.

The prairie grasses were good, and their greenness quite remarkable when compared with the North-West Territory. At Rosenfeld there did not seem to be much stock, but on nearing some of the other villages we saw many herds of cattle. The stock belonging to each separate village community graze in common, every member contributing half a dollar a head for the herdsman. On the same principle, a general subscription is raised for a schoolmaster—who, it appears, instead of keeping a school for the children to come to, visits instead, and teaches at each house in turn; but how this plan could work was not quite clear to me.

It was apparent that there was a controlling hand directing the arrangements of these Mennonites; their villages were all regularly laid out on a uniform plan, and situated at equal distances apart. On their northern side the prairie was left unenclosed, in a stretch thirty-six miles long, for grazing purposes. On the southern side of each village was the mowing ground for hay, and behind this again lay the tillage lands, all adjoining each other, instead of being scattered about here, there, and everywhere. I assume that each village has its recognised boundary. The houses were much more roomy and more comfortable than any I had previously seen, and, on the whole, I think the Mennonites should be congratulated on the success they have thus far achieved. I certainly observed no signs of the uncleanness which is attributed to them.

They were growing the best crops I have seen, either in Manitoba or the North-West Territory; and they struck me as being a happy, contented, and prosperous people, with more of the real settler about them

than I had noticed elsewhere. When once settled, they remain, and look upon the place as their home, working the land with the intention of making the best of it, without any idea of selling and moving on should an opportunity occur of turning their holdings into cash, and thus restlessly seeking a new home almost before they had become established in their old one. Indeed, I am not at all sure that they are allowed to sell; if they were, I think there would soon be plenty of customers seeking to buy their property.

The latest comer in the settlement said that of his 160 acres, he cultivated fifteen as hay, nineteen as wheat, eleven as oats, and four acres only as barley, the rest of his holding being grass. He possessed one cow, two calves, and three horses. If settlers elsewhere would but break up their 160 acres in the same proportion, there would be less rush and fluctuation of population, and a better chance for the future steady development of the country. This man's old home had lain between Moscow and Odessa, rather to the north-east of Kiev, and he said it was much colder here than there. Nothing, however, would have persuaded him to go back to Russia, and he seemed even to dread the very idea of such a thing ever being possible; which tends to show the horror and aversion in which the oppressions of the Russian Government are held by these people. Another of the settlers stated that of his 160 acres, thirty were under wheat, fourteen were oats, five barley, and one potatoes. We bought some eggs here at eighteen cents per dozen; the Mennonites like a bargain, but are very careful to be exact about it. I believe they are fair in their dealings, and that their

charges are moderate. It is possible that the undoubted prejudice which exists against them may partly owe its origin to the fact of their selling the produce of their farms at a more reasonable and moderate rate than the other settlers do. As regards the "mode of settlement" practised by the Mennonites, I think other settlers have a great deal to learn by their example; for, in the first place (as I said before), they farm their land, not as a speculation, but with the intention of remaining on it, and making it their home; and secondly, they work it on a system, and break up less land, thus reserving a larger proportion of pasture, which I feel sure is right. As the country opens up, more grain will be grown, and therefore the price of wheat will fall, while stock, on the contrary, is continually increasing in value, and ought eventually to be produced in far larger quantities throughout all these provinces.

I also like the adoption of the village plan: considering Manitoba and the North-West Territory include such a large area, I cannot help thinking that it would be very simple to try the experiment of laying out some townships on an approved model village plan, in order to see how the project would be received by the public. The female part of the population would, I am sure, look on it with approval, for the present monotony of a long winter in an isolated district must be terribly dull for them. With the Mennonites the manure from the cow-houses is cut into oblong pieces, just in the same manner as peat is cut in Ireland; it is then dried in the sun, and afterwards stacked like a peat-rick; it is used in winter, when mixed with wood, to kindle a fire.

Mennonite Litigation, 1870s and 1880s

Recently, we have been working on processing various collections in the Archives of the Mennonite Church that already had been accessioned for many years, but were never processed. One of these collections is that of John N. Durr (1853-1934), a bishop in the Southwestern Pennsylvania Mennonite Conference (SPMC). He was the youngest person ever known to be ordained in the Mennonite Church to the offices of minister and bishop (18 and 20, respectively). He was the first moderator of the SPMC, 1876-98; as well as the General Conference Committee, 1896; and the preliminary General Conference, 1897. His collection contains valuable information concerning the SPMC and the forming of Mennonite General Conference. There are also some other important discoveries therein that add to our knowledge of nineteenth-century Mennonitism, such as the documentation published below on litigation.

It has not been common in Mennonite history to find instances of Mennonite involvement in court actions. The rare occasions usually involved Mennonites as defendants, as it was forbidden to sue in court. Yet among Durr's papers we find the account of an unusually interesting court case that eventually reached the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in which Boyertown Mennonite Church was both the appellant and appellee.

In 1847, the Boyertown Mennonite Church split into two congregations due in part to dissension on the proper cut of the coat worn by ministers. The progressive congregation—New Mennonites, as they were called—left the Franconia Conference and joined with John H. Oberholtzer's newly formed conference that later became part of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Both congregations continued to worship in the same meetinghouse quite harmoniously until disagreement arose over ownership in 1877.

The case of ownership was taken to the Berks County Court of Common Pleas in 1877, but not resolved until 1883. Judge Hageman first assigned the case to Master Benjamin F. Dettra whose task was to hear the case, write a report and judgment, and then present the report to the judge for his approval. Dettra's judgment was in favor of the Old Mennonite group, but was appealed by the New Mennonites on legal exceptions in his judgment. Judge Hageman then appointed Master Frank R. Shell to the case who ruled in favor of the New Mennonites. Hageman accepted the latter report. The Old Mennonites appealed to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania which in 1883 reversed the decision, accepting the first master's report.

It is interesting to note the reasons given by the masters and judges on which they had based their decision. It is apparent that at least the second master was moved in part to base his decision not on legal premises, but theological. Special attention should be given to the comments of Judge Hageman. He gives some insight on how Mennonites of the day were perceived by society. His counsel, although meant for the two dissenting Mennonite groups of that time, could just as well be meant for their heirs today who are looking at reunification.

The first document is from the Reading, Pennsylvania, Daily Herald of April 21, 1883. The second document consists of excerpts and summaries from A. G. Green's appeal for the Old Mennonites before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. (The 40 page publication is located at the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library.) The third document was published as part of the first document, and is the only known published source of this text. For additional information on this case, see the A. G. Green appeal mentioned above, and the October 1972 Mennonite Quarterly Review issue on John H. Oberholtzer.

—J. Kevin Miller

Document #1

Boyertown's Celebrated Church Case Decided in Favor of the Ancient Mennonites: A Curious and Lengthy Litigation. History of the Case

A case of more than usual interest, which was been in litigation for sometime in the courts of Berks County, has just been decided by the Supreme Court. It is known as the

Boyertown Mennonite Church case. The contest was for the possession of a church and lot in Boyertown, which has been used by the Mennonite congregation as a place of worship since 1790. The Mennonite congregation to whom the property was deeded continued in sole and exclusive possession of the property, when a split took place in the Mennonite denomination, caused, it is said, by a dissension about the proper cut of a

coat. The Bolters were led by Rev. John H. Oberholtzer, who, with his followers, organized another conference in opposition to the Franconia Conference, to which all the Mennonites had formerly belonged. The split in the conference also extended to the Boyertown church, and a minority of its members joined the new party. The old party, however, allowed the new one to continue to worship in the church, they occupying the edifice one Sunday in every four weeks at first and afterwards every two weeks. Everything proceeded quietly until 1876, when the old congregation resolved to erect a new church. Then the "New Measure party," as they were called, on the 24th of June 1876, filed a bill in equity to restrain the old congregation from tearing down the old church, and set up the claim that they were tenants in common of the property.

On January 11th, 1877, the case was referred to B. F. Dettra, Esq., as master and examiner, who took a great deal of testimony relating to the title of the property, the beliefs of the Mennonites and the history of the differences between them. From this testimony, it appears, among other curious customs, that the ministers of the church received no pay, but were required to wear a peculiar cut of coat, known as the "shadbelly," except that a new minister was not subject to the rule until he had worn out his old stock of clothes. The old Mennonites would not allow any musical instruments in their churches, and they are forbidden to sue at law, although they may make a defense, if sued. The first trouble which arose in the church was from the refusal of Rev. Oberholtzer to wear the prescribed clerical coat. He was remonstrated with, but justified his conduct on the ground that the Bible did not prescribe any particular form of coat to be worn by a minister. In Mr. Oberholtzer's testimony he says his coat was objected to for various reasons—some did not like the collar, some objected to the buttons, and others were aggrieved on account of the shape of the tail. The coat matter continued to be a matter of contention and argument for several years, until, finally, Oberholtzer and his friends seceded, as above stated, and began to wear their coats as they pleased. They also favored music in the churches, and

other innovations which were distasteful to the old Mennonites.

The master, after having the case in hand for a long time, decided in favor of the old congregation, ruling that the new one had no rights in the property, but were merely tenants by sufferance. To this decision the plaintiffs excepted, and the court referred the case to another master, who reversed Mr. Dettra's decision. The court confirmed this latter decision, and from this action, A. G. Green, Esq., representing the old church party, took an appeal to the supreme court, which has just reversed the court below, affirmed Mr. Dettra's opinion, and decided the case in favor of the old church. . . .

Document #2
Landis's Appeal.
102 Pa. 468

March 2d, 1883. Before Mercur, C. J., Gordon, Paxson, Trunkay, Streeret, Green and Clark, JJ.
Appeal from the Court of Common Pleas of Berks: In equity. Of January Term 1883, No. 344.

Bill in equity by Henry H. Borneman, et al., trustees of the Mennonite Congregation at Boyertown, Pa., against Samuel H. Landis et al., trustees and building committee of the same, praying for an injunction to restrain the defendants from demolishing a meetinghouse, and from the erection of a new place of worship on said premises, and further praying that the parties litigant be deemed and decreed tenants in common of said property.

Before the Master and Examiner (B. Frank Dettra, Esq.), the following facts appeared:

In or about the year 1790, Henry Stauffer and Mary Ann, his wife, granted to Abraham Bechtel and Henry High, their heirs and assigns, an acre of ground in the village of Boyertown, Pa., "in trust, to and for the uses and trusts, interests and purposes hereinafter limited and declared, and to and for no other purpose whatsoever; that is to say, to the only use and behoof of the religious society or Mennonite Congregation of Colebrookdale township aforesaid and the neighborhood, who now or hereafter may worship in the house already erected . . . on said lot, to

wit: for a burial ground, for keeping a school and meetings in the house already erected on said lot, and for erecting such other house of worship thereon, or such other pious and charitable uses or purposes as shall be thought proper by a majority of the congregation at large, called together, or as many of the regular members thereof as shall attend on due notice to give their votes in such case."

On the ground thus conveyed, the Mennonite congregation of Colebrookdale township, or, as it was afterwards called, Boyertown, had already erected a meetinghouse in which, as also in a more commodious edifice erected in its place in 1819, they worshipped for many years. The several Mennonite churches of Eastern Pennsylvania, of which Colebrookdale was one, has been associated in a common conference called from its place of meeting the Franconia Conference, which was composed of clerical and lay delegates from the several congregations, and whose purpose was the general government of the church. In or about the year 1844, a discussion arose in this conference concerning the customs and usages of the Mennonite Church. One party desired to introduce various innovations into their mode of life and

religious worship, a departure that was signalized by the leader of the movement, a Rev. John Oberholtzer, appearing in the conference in a coat of a different cut from the customary garb of the Mennonite persuasion. The discussion of these differences between the two parties, known as the "Old" and "New" Mennonite Church, gave rise to a great dissension in the conference, and finally culminated in 1847 in the Oberholtzer or "new" party formally withdrawing from the Franconia Conference and organizing a new judicatory. Of the two preachers at Colebrookdale, one, a Mr. Gehman, sided with the Franconia Conference or the "Old" church, while the other, a Mr. Clemmer, espoused the cause of the Oberholtzer party. A separation thus ensued, but both parties, being non-combatant in principle, consented to worship in the meetinghouse on alternate Sabbaths, and this peaceful arrangement continued for twenty-nine years.

Under these circumstances, the old congregation, which remained in the Franconia Conference, and which composed a majority of the whole number, concluded to tear down the then existing church edifice, and erect a more commodious structure. In recognition of the long-continued occupancy of the church on alternate



Boyertown Meeting house, built 1879-83 (from J. C. Wenger, *History of the Mennonites of the Franconia Conference*, 1937, with permission.

Sabbaths by the new congregation, they drew up a paper, in which, after stating their intention of rebuilding, they offered the new party the use of the church on alternate Sabbaths, as theretofore, but accompanied their offer with a stipulation that "no musical instruments or any other things objectionable to the old congregation" should be introduced. The paper concluded as follows: "The new congregation shall be at liberty to aid in the building and contribute to the liquidating of the costs according to their own free will and pleasure, as they deem just and proper."

The new congregation refused to accept this stipulation, and, on the attempted demolition of the building, filed this bill in equity praying as aforesaid.

The Master reported, *inter alia*, (1) that the withdrawal from the Franconia Conference by the Oberholtzer party was an actual separation from the Mennonite faith, and the formation of a new ecclesiastical organization; (2) that such withdrawal by the plaintiffs was an abandonment of all their right and title in the Boyertown Church property, and that it belonged exclusively to those who remained in the jurisdiction of the Franconia Conference; (3) that the use of the Church at Boyertown was merely permissive and that therefore, no title arose by reason of any statute of limitations; (4) that the plaintiffs are not tenants in common, but merely tenants by sufferance. He therefore reported that the plaintiffs bill be dismissed, with costs. The court after argument, recommitting the case to another Examiner and Master (Frank R. Schell, Esq.) with leave to take further testimony, who reported, *inter alia*, that the deed contained no express condition that this congregation should be under the supervision of the Franconia Conference or any other conference of the Mennonite Church; that it is doubtful whether this conference could be called an ecclesiastical judicatory; but assuming that it was, only a radical change of faith and doctrine and not a mere separation from any particular church judicatory would have the effect to forfeit its rights in the trust; that the changes proposed by the New Mennonites were not such radical changes in faith and doctrine, but were evidence of a progressive spirit, which merited judicial sanc-

tion rather than condemnation; that independent of these facts, both parties by their acts and conduct after the division in 1847 are estopped from now disputing the right of either to the common enjoyment of the church property. He therefore recommended that the parties to the bill be decreed tenants in common, and that the defendants pay the costs of this proceeding.

Exceptions filed to this report by the defendants were dismissed by the Court (Hageman, P. J.), and the report confirmed. The defendants thereupon took this appeal, assigning for error the action of the court in not dismissing the exceptions to the report of the first master and in dismissing their exceptions to and confirming the report of the second master.

Judge Hageman, in his report, stated: ". . . It is to be regretted that the members of this religious organization should have such differences which they cannot harmonize. The Mennonite Church is world-wide renowned for peace, brotherly love, and good will to all, and for the amicable settlement of all their difficulties among themselves in a Christian spirit. The Court is the last place to which they should resort, and indeed never should until all other amicable modes at an honest effort of adjustment have failed. Once in Court, immaterial how it may terminate, feelings of discord are often engendered, that many years will not allay. Neighbors who before were friends are parted forever."

Document #3

The following is the text of the opinion which was delivered by Justice Gordon, of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, on April 16, 1883.

We cannot understand why the court rejected the report of the master who was first appointed to examine this case. It is very full, clear and impartial in its statement of facts, and in view of these facts, the conclusion reached seems to us inevitable. These New Measure men had not a foot to stand on, in the way of the maintenance of the bill, legal or equitable. More than half a century before the secession of Oberholtzer, and those who adopted his principles, the property in controversy was deeded to the Mennonite congregation of Cole-

brookdale Township, and there is not a circumstance in the case that points to the disproof of the fact that the defendants represent the legal succession of the original congregation of 1790. Not only has the same organization been regularly continued from that time, but as the master finds, so far back as tradition extends, it has had the same ecclesiastical connection. It may indeed be true that this long connection with the Franconia Conference may not be of any great importance in the disposition of this case; forasmuch as the Mennonite churches are, in their government, congregational, historically, however, it has some force as an indication of what was the original Colebrookdale congregation. But passing this question of ecclesiastical connection—which, were it material, must at once drive the plaintiffs to the wall, for they make no pretence to a connection with the old conference—we ask, upon what do these New Measure people profess to stand? Not upon the fact that they are a majority of the congregation, for it is admitted that they are but a minority; hence, according to the organic law of congregationalism, [they are] not entitled to the control of the church and its property. Neither do they profess to represent the original Mennonite doctrines, for confessedly they are dissenters.

The second master, in his report, has said that the primary cause of the difference between these people had its origin in the cut of the Rev. Mr. Oberholtzer's coat. Undoubtedly such was the fact, for this newfangled coat, when it first made its appearance in the conference, symbolized rebellion and a change of principles; and it is not the first time that the cut or turning of a coat has signified something of much more importance than was apparent either in its style or texture. In this case it meant a written constitution instead of a merely traditional one; a revision of the catechism, a permission to marry outside the pale of the church, a permission to institute aggressive proceedings at law, and an allowance of the use of instruments in church music. Now, we do not undertake to say that these are not improvements on the old way of doing things. They may or may not be so, just as people choose to think about them. But of these matters it is not our business, as it was not the business of the court

below to decide; for they are questions of conscience, and belong to individual judgment. But we do undertake to say that these things definitely determined the fact that the plaintiffs do not represent the principles of the old Mennonite congregation of 1790, and that, on the other hand, they do most conclusively prove that the appellees represent but a sect of that congregation.

If, then, it be so that these complainants are not the representatives of the original ecclesiastical connection, if they have not with them a majority of the congregation, and if they do not adhere to the original Mennonite tenets, upon what substantial ground do they ask for a decree?

It is true that the old congregation, with a generosity that is as rare as it is commendable, permitted the dissenters to use its church building for the purpose of worship on alternate Sabbaths; but as this use was merely permissive, and as the old congregation did not thereby surrender either its possession or right of possession, the plaintiffs, by their occupancy, have not gained even the inception of a title by force of the statute of limitations.

In this, as in other particulars, we agree with the master who prepared the first report; the possession of the plaintiffs was in subordination to that of the defendants; they came in under and not adversely to the title of the old congregation, and being thus in privity with that title, they are, as to the church property, but tenants at sufferance (*Brennan vs. Brennan*, 106 a 263).

The decree of the court below is now reversed and set aside, and the bill is dismissed at the cost of the appellees.

Book Reviews

American Mennonites and Protestant Movements. By Beulah Stauffer Hostetler. Scottdale, Pa./Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1987. 366 pp. \$29.95 (\$41.95 in Canada).

I first read this book as a doctoral dissertation and now again after it

has been expanded and completely rewritten for a wider audience. It is a captivating, perceptive, and exciting book. Perhaps it is all of these for me because I have lived in the Franconia area and pastored a Mennonite congregation for the past fifteen years. Or it may be that I was biased already years ago by this author's editorial skills that turned my passable Christopher Dock manuscript (published in 1967) into a far better one. But these reasons are all subjective when in fact this author is gifted in writing with a clarity and strength mingled with tasteful restraint that wastes no words while she builds her case.

The author has marshalled an impressive amount of documentation to support her thesis. Her use of the term "charter" is essential to the understanding that this is her term chosen to represent "the sum of beliefs and values expressed in the Seven Articles" of what is commonly known as the Schleithem Confession. She dares to argue, as it were, from the ethos of the Franconia Mennonites that their experience is a prototype of American Mennonitism. Her argument is very persuasive if not beyond dispute.

Hostetler soon discovered that Franconia Mennonite beliefs were imbedded in patterns of life that were largely nonverbal in character. But in the course of the development of her thesis she has found documentation, sparing in the early years but later more voluminous. Even for the early period she discovered, "a few extant documents expressed a spiritual warmth and wisdom that belied the standard assessment of the group as backward and petrified."

She compares Mennonites with the American Protestant movements we have come to know as Pietism, Revivalism, Institutionalization, Millennialism and Fundamentalism. In the course of developing her thesis, she gives excellent thumbnail sketches of diverse groups within American Mennonitism. In only a few cases did I wish for a bit more elaboration.

The author makes some telling observations that illustrate that while the Franconia Mennonites professed the Dordrecht Confession to be wholly theirs, yet in several critical areas their practice proved otherwise; e.g., while one of the most widely recognized characteristics of

American Mennonites was their emphasis on separation from the world—an item to which the Schleithem articles clearly attest—the Dordrecht Confession does not contain an article on separation at all.

From the dedication of this book to Hannah Rittenhouse Clemens "whose reminiscences led me beyond stereotypes" to the closing paragraphs, this book is a gold-mine of hitherto little used, if not unknown, documentation not to mention that it bristles with keen insights regarding the interaction between the Mennonites and the culture of the New World. The final chapter brings the story up to very recent times and includes some pungent summaries—e.g., "despite unresolved dilemmas, the Mennonites demonstrated an alternate understanding of the gospel—one that was more lived than spoken, more relational than dogmatic, one seeking peace rather than conquest."

I highly recommend this book to all who are interested in more than simply the historical bones of Mennonite history and practice. There is included here an excellent bibliography and a generally thorough index. It is well illustrated throughout.

—Gerald C. Studer

Recent Publications

Beachy, Lucy. *Daniel Bender Family History*. Grantsville, Maryland, 1985. \$25.00. Order from Bender Book Revision Committee, c/o The Casselmar, Grantsville, MD 21936.

Bonawit, Oby J. *Compilations of early Wissler, Whisler and Whistler families*. Miami, Florida, 1985. Pp. 120. \$15.00. Order from author, 12030 SW 68 Ave., Miami, FL 33156.

Denlinger, Elizabeth. *The Newton G. Herr Family*. 1984. Pp. 47. \$8.50. Order from Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

Kauffman, Mrs. Samuel. *Descendants of Benjamin S. Hershberger and Catherine Berlincourt*. Greentown, Indiana. Pp. 96. Order from author, 8912 E. CR 500 N. Greentown, IN 46036.

Mahaffey, Nola Egle, comp. *Relative-by Speaking (Vol. II)*. Pp. 191. \$21.00. Order from compiler, P.O. Box 1200, Palm Bay, FL 32906.

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The Good Old Days

by Tilman Smith

I have two articles before me which seem to belie one another: "Why the Craze for the 'Good Old Days'?", and "The Good Old Days Didn't Exist . . . Those Were Terrible Days." We can gather valuable perspective from each position but neither point of view can be our focus for the future.

Nearly everyone enjoys a trip into the past because reminiscing is a part of our lives and everything that has touched us has influenced us. Children in fantasy look backward and forward and every other direction! As we grow older, we need to make these periodic voyages so we can compare today against yesterday and vice versa. In this way we can make judgments and set priorities. Retrospection is a mechanism of our minds and probably a good one to help forget the bad things, the cruelties and hardships that happened in our "good old days" and to harbor, accentuate or even garnish the more favorable things.

Clearing the Clinkers. The purpose of this story is not to debunk the past but rather to understand it better, and to get a somewhat realistic rather than a nostalgic view of our earlier days.

We owe much to our forebears. The pioneers in particular were a courageous, gritty, creative, abstemious lot, willing to take great risks for long-term goals and priorities—especially the women who in many cases sacrificed the most and were recognized the least. (The early settlers were more apt to build better barns first, and only later, better houses.)

There were situations from these early times and events which we would wish to emulate and recover. Many situations we would not wish to repeat and in this we rejoice that we live in twentieth-century America, with its massive problems,

but also, with its magnificent resources.

The Goshen (Indiana) News, 7-5-86, carried a picture of an event in the Topeka, Indiana Sesquicentennial celebration. It showed a new two-seated carriage drawn by a beautiful team of spirited coach horses conveying the dignitaries about town. It was an elegant sight and stirred my memory. It didn't cause me to hanker for my early days on the farm, however, when we were dependent on horses and buggies for family transportation and horses and wagons to move our farm produce. I have no strong yen for the muddy roads, or rough frozen roads, hauling corn or oats to market in the dead of

winter in a wagon unprotected from the elements.

Some critics are calling our fascination in looking back with longing as a great leap backward and others call it "nostalgia." Some years ago Archibald MacLeish stated: "It is not difficult to understand why these changes are occurring. People are disillusioned by what's going on today and they are returning to history."

The Status Quo — a Mess? A person of rather humble educational and cultural attainments was asked to explain the word "status quo." He responded more adroitly than expected: "That's the mess we's in."

If we tend to be problem-oriented



One-hundred years ago: A Mennonite family in their Sunday best, ca. 1888. Notice the earrings worn by the mother, but not the daughters. The Sever and Sarah Lantz Byler family. From l. to r., daughters Adda (seated), Emma, Salina, and Nettie (all standing), and foster son Charles Kettleborough. Charles was raised by the Byler family from age three, and became a nationally-known political scientist. Between 1911 and the time of his death in 1938 it is estimated that he drafted seventy-five percent of the laws enacted by the Indiana General Assembly.

—J. Kevin Miller

we may think that North America and the world have never seen or wrestled with rankling problems before. The "mess we is in" is imposing: alcohol and other drugs, shoddy ethics in high places and low, crime which defies any rationality, family disintegration, child and parent abuse, abortion, divorce, prostitution, AIDS and other sexual diseases, unemployment, underemployment, gangs, fear to go out on the streets, shallow religiosity, nuclear threats, poverty and starvation, racism, terrorism, sexism, ageism, wars and rumors of wars, and so on. Is this catalog of sins exclusively and uniquely appropriate only for the 1970s and 1980s in North America? Few of these sins are of current origin. The prophet Amos in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament cried out vehemently against most of them. Modern knowledge and inventions have increased the capacity for sin but the will and the genius to sin are not new. Some things are worse, much worse, and some better, much better today.

Our Forebears were Macho?

Some political pulpsters who don't know how to handle today's issues like to wrap the thirteen-star colonial American flag about them and call attention to the kinds of men those days produced (or vice versa) and tell us how these same virtues would get us back on the right track today. The founders of the American Constitution devised an unusually fine document. These illustrious persons thought through a maze of hard circumstances and with early amendments and later amendments—some, very late—Americans now enjoy privileges few in this world enjoy. Today many TV preachers and other purveyors of media of broad circulation ask us to emulate the religion and morals of that day. According to these witnesses and political seers, our forebears were rugged individualists, hard workers, moral to the core, steeped in strong religious and

church tradition, completely independent socially and economically, physically hale and hardy, and alert to every good work. Some were! Very recently the "halos" of some of the more notorious of the TV purveyors of religious hypocrisy have become mere shadows!

Will Rogers, 1879-1935, American actor and humorist, said: "Things ain't what they used to be and never was." There has never been an age in America to which we can refer as a Golden Age. There has never been a period which can be broadly defined as normal. The period between the Civil War and the First World War has been called by some the Gilded Age. Some speak of the "Gay 90s." The 1890s were gay, but for only a few.

America was a Rose Garden?

Otto Bettmann, social historian, came to the United States from Germany in 1935. He formed the Bettmann Archives which house 3 million pictures and other items of old-time Americana. He says: "We have a warped idea of America's past due to nostalgia. . . . It is a mechanism of our psyche to forget all the bad things that happened in the old days. We look at the little trimmings of the time, but not the essential cruelties and hardships." (*South Bend Tribune*, Dec. 8, 1974)

Bettmann lists the following conditions during what was known as the Gilded Era including the Gay 90s, some, with specific dates:

- 1882 - It was recommended that Central Park in New York City be closed after dark because of crime.
- 1890 - New York Police Commissioner estimated there were 40,000 prostitutes in the city.
- There were 3 million horses in the cities: 15,000 alone in Rochester, N.Y., a small city. People also kept cows and the manure was piled high. Flies? Stench? Pollution? Yes!
- Sweatshop seamstresses made \$7.00 for an 84-hour week.

- Children made up much of the labor force in the mills.
- Heroin was sold as cough medicine.
- Teachers paid \$120.00 to local political bosses in Philadelphia for a job.
- In 1870, a school teacher in Canton, Massachusetts, Elta Barstow, was stoned to death by four boys she kept after school.
- Teddy Roosevelt (President of the United States, 1901-1909) as a member of the New York Assembly (1890) branded as "communistic" the demand of streetcar drivers for a 12-hour day. They were working 16-hour days for \$12.00 a week.
- In 1898 F.B. Baker, a black man, was lynched at Lake City, S.C., for accepting a job as postmaster.
- "We are in a way a little spoiled now. In the olden days people did not expect much. They thought hardship was part of life. Now people want everything absolutely painless and instant."

On Morals. Martin E. Marty, Professor of the History of Modern Christianity at the University of Chicago and Assistant Editor of *Christian Century*, wrote the Bicentennial Essay for *Time* magazine, October 27, 1975, with the title, "Vice and Virtue: Our Moral Condition." We may be shocked at his findings: "For whatever that means, church membership in the 1770s was actually much lower than it is today—only six percent or eight percent of the population by most estimates. The Great Awakening of the middle third of the century had given way to a big sleep." Guy F. Hershberger, Professor Emeritus of History at Goshen College corroborates these figures. He states: "In New England church membership was perhaps twelve percent of the population, six percent in the middle colonies and five percent in the South." (*Mennonite Quarterly Review*, July 1970, p. 215)

According to a study reported in

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U.S. News and World Report (October 11, 1982), church membership in the United States was 49.7% of the population. Rhode Island, 75.5%; Utah, 75.2%, and North Dakota, 73.9%, were the highest. Nevada, 29.3%; Alaska, 30.8%; Washington, 31%; Hawaii, 33.2%; California, 34.5%, were the lowest.

Professor Marty has further illuminating comments in his Bicentennial Essay: "In fact, during the 1770s saints were scarcely visible and holiness was rare. Some good and heroic activities were performed by frail, errant and often irreligious people. Certainly, multitudes of decent folk led conventionally moral lives. But a second look at the past will be jolting to those who think that sexual waywardness and permissiveness are recent inventions. Public figures could keep mistresses and acknowledge their illegitimate children—as Benjamin Franklin did—without losing their good names or even their reputations as moralists. . . .

"In Groton, Mass., one-third of the 200 people who joined the church between 1761 and 1775 confessed to fornication. . . .

"Gambling was universal, and fighting was taken in stride. . . .

"Gerald Carson, a student of American manners, rightly notes that, 'a prohibitionist in colonial America would have been considered a lunatic.' . . .

"The churches reached a lower ebb of vitality during the two decades (1780-1800) after the end of hostilities than at any other time in the country's religious history. . . .

"As for the churches, the situation on the surface appears to be better than it was two centuries ago or than it is elsewhere now. Measured by Western European standards or by those of almost any moment in the American past except for the 1950s—when a somewhat superficial resurgence occurred—religious organizations are surviving and achieving much. If the mainline Catholic and Protestant churches are in holding patterns or even declining slightly the more fervent and rigid churches have found fresh followers."

Economically and Socially Independent? When social security was proposed in the early 1930s many argued against it saying it would lead to dependence and people would not

seek to provide for themselves in their later days. It was always pointed out how free and independent economically and socially our forebears had been. This argument was a figment of the imagination. The fact: Before social security, historically, two-thirds of the people who became 65 or retired earlier, were dependent economically on someone else—their families, relatives or the local government.

Were our forebears economically and socially independent? David Hackett Fischer in *Growing Old in America* (Oxford Press, 1977, 163-64) says: "Between 1780 and 1950 most American workers lived through recurring panics and economic depressions which wiped out the few savings they had scraped together in good times. When they finally reached old age pathetically little was left for a lifetime of unrelenting toil. . . . During the past one-hundred-and-thirty years the net savings of the lower two-thirds of the population had commonly approached zero. Even middle-class Americans who might have managed to save at least part of their income for their old age were not likely to do so." A blessing in disguise was that most older persons did not have to live long in poverty and dependence. Life expectancy was 47 years in 1900!

The Koerners of Cullom, Illinois

by Minnie Mary
Koerner Roeschley

The three, well researched biographies that make up this historical episode have been written by Minnie Mary Koerner Roeschley, a daughter of Peter Körner, Jr. The basic geographic context is Metamora, and Cullom, Illinois; the "cast of characters" includes both a Catholic, Peter Körner, Sr., and a Mennonite, Maria Doretta Ebrecht Herwig Körner, and their children. Of interest is how this Catholic, Peter, Sr., and Mennonite, Maria, decided to resolve the denominational question.

References to the now-extinct Cullom Mennonite Congregation are also significant for turn-of-the-century Mennonite history.

—Leonard Gross

Peter Körner (1826-1914). The first son of Valentine and Catherina Artner Körner was born April 10, 1826, at Waldorf, Baden-Baden, Germany. In Germany, many were known by their profession rather than by their given name. Peter was the "Master Shoemaker" Körner, a brother was "Glassblower" Körner and there was a "Windmill" Körner. The west side of the Rhine was wet and swampy, and the "windmill" Körner worked on governors to regulate the windmill speed. After the people made improvements, the government often resettled them in another area.

Peter married Elizabeth Zimmerman in Germany on Jan. 21, 1851, at 9 a.m. with permission from the Grand Duke's office at Wiesback (or Walldorf) #203, according to the Catholic Rectory records at Walldorf. Elizabeth was a daughter of Kaspar Zimmerman, a carpenter and bricklayer, and Katherine Reichart. Kaspar was a grandfather to Louise Zimmerman Koerner (American spelling) of Kankakee, Ill., whose husband owned and operated the Koerner Airport there.

Four sons were born to Peter Sr., and Elizabeth—Anton, Valentine, Frank and George. Peter Sr. came to America in 1860 to earn money to return for his wife and sons. He brought his cobbler stool, which he likely made, also brought the stand for the "iron" lasts for the different size shoes, also his hammer. The stool has been kept in our family by one of our daughters. Peter Sr. worked his way to America on a cattle boat, landed in New York, then worked on a truck garden in New Jersey six months. He came to Peoria, Ill., via the Grand Army of the Republic Canal, and other waterways. The Peoria, Ill. city directories list different Körners, and Koerners, from 1858-1869 and possibly some were relatives ready to help him. In 1864, his wife Elizabeth died in Germany. A nephew, his brother, Michael's son Matthew brought Peter's sons from Germany to America.

Peter Sr. found work operating a steam engine with the Bachman-Stoops grain harvesting partnership in Woodford County, near Metamora, Ill. The Mennonites at Metamora knew of German immigrants needing help and Chris and Lizzie Yordy Bachman who were



Seated: Peter Körner, Sr., and Maria (Mary) Ebrecht. Standing: (children) Mary Ann ("Molly") and Peter Jr., Ca. 1885.

connected with this grain harvesting partnership hired Maria Doretta Ebrecht Herwig, a widow, who had also immigrated from Germany (in 1853 with her first husband) and who also was seeking work in Peoria after her husband died in Missouri. She cooked for these threshers. Peter Sr. and Maria (Mary, in America) were married July 17, 1866. Grandfather Koerner gave her the privilege of bringing up any children they may have, from this marriage, in her faith, but the four Koerner sons would remain Catholic.

Mary Doretta evidently attended the Partridge Church (now the Metamora Mennonite Church, along Route 116 near Eureka) with the Bachmans. Sarah, age four, the youngest Herwig daughter, lived with Peter and Mary, as well as George, eight, the youngest Koerner son. Peter and Mary became parents of Mary Ann (Mollie), April 26, 1867, and Peter Jr., May 14, 1868. They worked for the Bachmans until 1871 when they purchased a 160-acre farm in Ford County (for \$14.00 per acre), (NW ¼, sec. 33, twp 28, range 9, eight miles north of Piper City, seven years before the Illinois Central Railroad or Cullom, Ill. were established.)

The town of Bi-County was four miles east and one mile south of their new farm, with a wagon repair shop and other stores, all of which moved to Piper City when the T P & W Railroad went through there.

A son, Frederick, was born to

them in 1872 but died in 1874, and was buried in their pasture.

Their land was very swampy and their children helped drive away the flocks of wild geese that came in droves and would swoop down and pull up the corn plants, kernel and all, from the wet ground.

Mary Ann married Christian Christophel in 1887 and after a few years homesteaded in Norcross, Mn. The four older Koerner sons took over the farm and Peter Sr. and Mary moved to a house one mile west and ¼ mile south of Cullom. Peter Jr. and Mary Christophel were married on Christmas Day, 1890, and farmed near Cullom. Grandmother Mary died on Dec. 7, 1893, and was buried in the Sullivan Center Cemetery, two miles west and 1 ½ miles north of Cullom. (In 1893 Sullivan Center was a town with a mail center for the Pony Express, and some stores. When the Illinois Central Railroad was built, the town was moved to Cullom.) Grandfather Koerner went to live with his children, and died June 14, 1914, when thrown from a buggy when the horse, driven by a grandson, became frightened by a car.

Maria Doretta Ebrecht Herwig Körner. My grandmother, Maria Doretta, was born Oct. three, 1826, according to the stone on her grave in Sullivan Center Cemetery. One set of German records reportedly gives Sept. 2, 1827 as the date; however, I am unable to obtain any records from Germany. The 1860 census for St.

Francois County, Pilot Knob, Missouri (P.O. Farmington, Mo.) states her birthplace as Brunswick, (Braunschweig) Germany. The census has her registered under family #757-760—as Dorothy Herwig. Because of her heavy German accent, her name was possibly understood as Dorothy instead of Doretta, by the one registering her. Her birth year listed on the census agreed with the year on her grave stone, and other family members were listed correctly.

Maria Doretta was married to Conrad Jacob Herwig of Hannover, Germany, Jan. 5, 1849, at Brunswick. Proof of this could not be found. The Herwigs with their three small children and Maria's parents and one of her brothers, Charles August, sailed for America, arriving in New York in Dec. 1853, although Maria's mother and the youngest Herwig child died at sea. They lived in or near Pilot Knob, Missouri, where we were informed that other immigrants had settled. Civil War battles were fought there, as they were in various areas, and her husband died in Dec. 1863, two months before the eleventh Herwig child was born. The store of Maria's brother (Charles August) was looted and burned by the soldiers and Charles was murdered. Maria's father, who had been listed in the 1860 census as Frederick Ebrecht, lived in the same household, until he died, as did four other small children in the next few years.

In this war-torn area there was no way a widow with this family could



Cullom (Illinois) Mennonite Church, built in 1882 (as pictured above), and remodeled in 1914. Platform in front of the meetinghouse was built so as to provide the correct height for stepping out of buggies. Note horse sheds in background.

find work and earn a living. Friends at Peoria, Ill., offered to help her find work. Friends at Pilot Knob gave the four older sons light work, the older daughter married and Maria brought Sarah, age four, and Fredrica, age two, with her to Peoria. Several friends, Henry and Sybil Kirberg, who had no children, took Fredrica into their home, and Grandmother kept Sarah with her.

How Grandmother (now Mary) found work with the Bachmans, where she met Grandfather Koerner who was also employed by the Bachmans, and the story of the remainder of her life is given under Grandfather's page (Peter Koerner Sr.). I wanted so very much to find her parents' names, especially since one daughter felt that her mother (Grandmother) hinted that she was "sponsored" by a couple in order to leave Germany.

Mary E. Christophel (1866-1940). Mary Christophel, a daughter of Jacob (1820-1900) and Nancy Lehman Christophel (1831-1909) was born March 24, 1866, near Nappanee, Ind., and with several brothers and sisters came to Cullom, Ill. around 1887. Their parents came a few years later and lived with two daughters, Mary Christophel Koerner and Salome Christophel Wenger. The Cullom Mennonite



Peter J. Koerner, ca. 1888, father of Minnie Koerner Roeschley.

Church was new and quite a number of people came from other states to help with the church and to find work. Mary came to do housework for the J. K. Lehmans, who had come to Illinois several years earlier and bought land there. East of Cullom, the land was swampy and needed drainage.

On Dec. 25, 1890, Mary and Peter Koerner Jr. were married. Peter was a son of Peter Sr. and Mary Doretta Koerner (who came from Metamora in 1871 and purchased some of the swampy land).

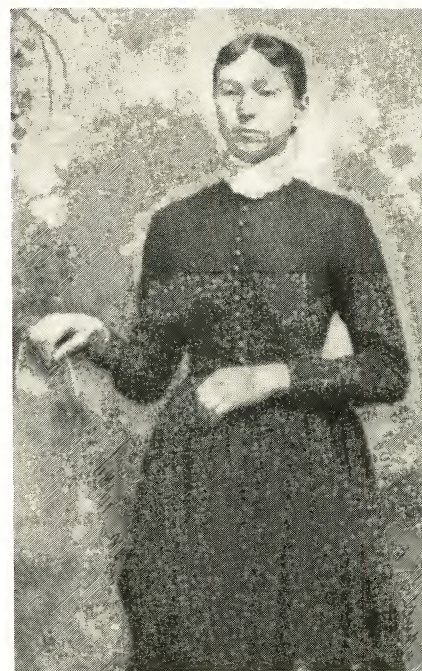
On one farm where Peter and Mary lived, there was a large apple orchard. A cider press was made by hollowing out a huge log, smoothing and cleaning it, and then driving large spikes through the bark to pierce the apples as they were pushed through. To get all the juice out, the apples were pressed, then strained. They had 50 barrels of juice which were shipped to a wholesale house in Bloomington, Ill. to be made into cider vinegar and sold.

Peter and Mary lived in Cullom also, a few years, until the children grew enough to be of more help and then they went back to farming. In Cullom, Mary was a seamstress for many people, and cut and designed patterns from a newspaper or tissue paper. Peter worked in the butcher shop as meat cutter and made their "cold meats." He also unloaded coal with a shovel from railroad cars into the railroad sheds along the tracks.

After a few years on the farm, they raised pigs in addition to the usual farming. One winter there was a hog cholera epidemic and all fifty pigs had to be destroyed, burned and buried, along with the clothes worn by the owners who tended them, even if just one animal was infected on that farm. This great loss was felt for a number of years. On another farm, a larger one, they again farmed with horses, also had cows, pigs, chickens and a blacksmith shop was built so they could put horseshoes on for neighbors' horses, repair canvass used on oat binders, etc.

Peter and Mary were parents of five children: Henry, Susie, Reuben, Elsie and Minnie. Mother Mary was a seamstress, and both Susie and Elsie continued in this occupation after the parents retired and moved back into Cullom in 1931.

Henry married Sadie Shantz in 1917 and farmed until they built a

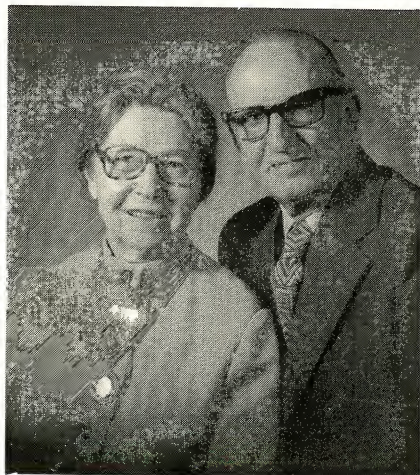


Mary E. Christophel, ca 1888.

home in Cullom and moved there many years later. Henry then owned and operated the Cullom school busses. They had two sons: Loray and Orie. Loray married Nettie Eigsti and they were the parents of Bonita, Rebecca and David. Orie married Emma Fisher and they were the parents of Ruby, Sharon, Rose, Marsha, Marvin, Vera and Verna. Both sons drove school busses at Cullom until moving away.

Reuben and Olive Hirstein were married in 1925 and farmed in the area. They were the parents of Duane, Francis and Ronald. Duane married Carol Kingdon and their children were Catherine Sue and Michael. Francis married Sandra Jones and their children were Darrell, Diane, Kenneth and Kevin. Ronald married Beth Ann Wright. After Olive's death in 1947, Reuben and sons moved into Cullom and started the Koerner Construction Co.

Minnie was the only one to graduate from high school. She also graduated from a business college and became the accountant and auditor at the then newly opened Hotel Kankakee, (Kankakee, Ill.) for nine years. She and Melvin M. Roeschley of Flanagan, Ill. were married in 1935. Melvin was a registered Guernsey cattle dairy farmer. Their children were: Norma (Mrs. Richard Slagell) children Ronald, Karen (Mrs. John Wenger) and Diane at Kalamazoo, Mich., and



Minnie and Melvin Roeschley, 1983.

Ruth (Mrs. Donald Slabaugh), children Todd and Kristen, Whitefish, Montana, near Glacier National Park. Both daughters are registered nurses, both their husbands, teachers, and all graduates of Goshen College.

Melvin and Minnie moved to Goshen, Ind., in 1985.

The John M. and Anna Mary (King) Hartzler Story

by H. Harold Hartzler

Early years and marriage. This story begins with the coming of Anna Mary King from West Liberty, Ohio, to the Yost Hartzler home in the beautiful Kishacoquillas Valley in Mifflin County, Pa. Anna Mary, whose mother died when she was eight, had never liked her step-mother, so in 1899 at the age of 21, she left home to find employment in Pennsylvania where her grandfather had grown to maturity.

Just why she chose the Yost Hartzler home as a place to work I am unable to answer. Yost's wife, Barbara, had died two years previously, and most of the eight children had left home. Mollie, John, and Jacob remained at home and evidently Yost felt the need for an additional housekeeper. Here Anna Mary met her future husband, John. At that time he was a public school teacher, having studied the Normal English course at Juniata College.

Anna Mary had previously worked in the Chicago Home Mission under the supervision of A. Hershey Leaman. After this she worked in the home of C. K. Hostetler, business manager of Goshen College. She also worked in a Whitman home in New Castle, Pa., before going to Mifflin County, Pa.

John Marion Hartzler, the second of three boys in the Yost Hartzler family, was considered too frail to become a farmer. Therefore his father decided that he might go to college, which was most unusual for an Amish Mennonite boy from the Kishacoquillas Valley. After graduating from Juniata College in 1897, he taught in rural schools in a number of locations in Mifflin County. After several years of teaching he decided to attend the Elkhart Institute in Elkhart, Indiana. He graduated in 1903 having studied in the Latin-Scientific course. He had also taught at the Institute during the summer session of 1902.

He returned to Pennsylvania in 1903 at the time when a number of his relatives, including his sister Elizabeth who had married Levi B. Yoder, moved to Surrey, North Dakota. The next year John was ordained as a minister to assist with the work at Surrey. He continued teaching all eight grades and began courting Anna Mary. They were married August 22, 1906, intending to soon go to North Dakota. However, due to the illness of B. B. King, they were asked by the Mission Board to take up the work at the Fort Wayne Mission in Indiana. They served there from March 1907 to June 1908. It was there that I (H. Harold) was born on April 7, 1908. Soon After, B. B. King married Malinda Mann on May 26, 1908, and they returned to the Fort Wayne Mission the next month.

To North Dakota and on to Maryland. B. B. King's return to Fort Wayne permitted my parents to go to North Dakota. They arrived in Surrey August 21, 1908. My father began teaching in a public school near Surrey, September 7, 1908. As reported by Levi Glick, my father took turns with Isaac Mast as instructor for the Sunday evening meetings. My mother often told us of the severe winter weather in North Dakota and how on a number of occasions my father had to follow the wire fence in

order to find his way home. The next August my brother Cecil Clayton was born. Soon after that my father received a call to minister at Long Green, Maryland. Mother was very happy to leave North Dakota and live in a warmer climate. The Mennonite Church at Long Green had been without a pastor for a number of years. It was there that I went to Sunday school. I recall that my grandfather Jacob Z. King, my uncle Jonathan Hartzler, and my aunt Mollie, married to John Smucker, visited us with her family in Long Green. I also remember going with my father in his painting business and of running after the spring wagon to get some feed at the mill. I vividly recall that a black man came to work for us on our small farm. The incident that impressed me most was the fact that he sat and ate at a separate table at lunch time. That, I never understood.

I did not start school until I was seven years old. My brother Clayton and I started together in Long Green in a two-room school from which I still have some of my school work. My three sisters, Ethel, Eva and Carrie were all born in Long Green. I remember the time when my twin sisters were born. After I had kissed one of them I asked whether I could kiss the other. I recall the time when my mother took us four children by sleeper train to visit our grandfather who lived on a farm near West Liberty, Ohio. While there I remember helping to drive sheep to the market in Bellefontaine. In the summer of 1915, while church members were cleaning up the church grounds, some sparks from a brush fire landed on the shingle roof of the church. Evidently no ladder was available so the entire church building burned. The following year we worshipped with the Church of the Brethren.

Belleville. In the spring of 1916 my father was asked to assist Joseph H. Byler in the ministry at the Belleville Mennonite church. We moved there in April when I was eight years old. At Belleville my father preached, taught school in the winter, and painted in the summer. As far back as I can remember I helped my father in the painting business. After his fatal fall in March 1925, while painting the house of a neighbor on Trella Street, my brother Clayton and I continued with

the painting business. During the years from 1916 to 1925 my mother took care of the family and helped to make a living by taking in washings.

The last two of the children of the Hartzler family were born in Belleville. John Marion was born April 23, 1917, and Una Grace, Nov. 13, 1918. She died three days later at the time of the great flu epidemic. I recall that all members of the family, with the exception of my sister Carrie, were ill at the same time. All of us went to primary and secondary school in Belleville. I graduated from Belleville High School in 1926 and followed my father to Juniata College, graduating in 1930.

John M. Hartzler. I have examined the *Gospel Herald* and have found several articles written by my father. Four appeared in 1917 and 1918 under the heading: "My Greatest Opportunity." Four areas of church work were discussed: 1. As a minister in a rural church; 2. In business; 3. In the social circle; 4. In the Sunday school. In the last article he states: "We have here a field of work whose opportunities are limitless, whose possibilities are boundless, and whose influences are endless." In another article he answers the question: "Why the devotional covering?"

My father was very conservative. He always wore the plain coat while preaching and was much concerned about musical instruments in the home. He loved vocal music, was a song leader, and often sang in our home, but he would have been horrified to see an organ or a piano in a Mennonite church. He was a great story teller, telling stories about the patriarchs to the children and taking the two younger children out of the house to tell them about the stars and the moon. I inherited his astronomy book which he studied at Juniata College.

Anna Mary King Hartzler. My mother kept the family together after the death of my father. She washed clothes for other people, had a small general store in Belleville, and served many meals at auction sales. Besides this she partly raised over 60 welfare children for which she was paid a small sum of money by the welfare board. Though she had only an eighth-grade education, she encouraged all of her children to continue their education. Four of us are

college graduates, three having advanced degrees, and one became a nurse. Clayton attended a special term at Eastern Mennonite College, served on their board of education, and was instrumental in starting the Mennonite Christian School in Big Valley.

Mother was much interested in traveling. I remember visiting with her in the vicinity of West Liberty, Ohio. My brother Clayton took her on extended trips to the western part of our country. I took her to Goshen, Indiana, at the time when I was considering teaching at Goshen College. She also went along on a trip to visit my sister Carrie Dodd in Oregon. She continued to be active all her life and made jelly the day before she died on Oct. 6, 1956, at the age of 78.

Christian Heritage. Both my father and my mother have set us good examples of Christian living. They showed us how to work, how to pray, and how to live a Godly life on a limited income. As far as I know, my father never received any money for his services as a minister. He never complained that he had a very limited income. He was very cheerful and was much concerned about the welfare of his family. Mother was more aggressive, but she respected father as the head of the household. I thank God for such a heritage.

Book Reviews

Karlstadt as the Father of the Baptist Movements: The Emergence of Lay Protestantism. By Calvin Augustine Pater. Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 1984. 350 pp. \$37.50.

Reading this book has rather substantially altered my long held understanding regarding the recognized founders of Anabaptism. I can no longer confidently credit Manz/Grebel/Blaurock with this honor though their contributions are no less important for this further light. Pater's opening sentence in his Preface is justified when he says: "This study offers a radically revised appraisal of Karlstadt's theology and his impact on the origins of the Bap-

tist movements of Reformation times."

(I must pause here to say that Pater does not subscribe in some respects to the otherwise generally accepted terminology and spelling. He constantly characterizes the continental movement as Baptist, rather than Anabaptist, and he prefers the spelling of Konrad rather than the widely used Conrad in reference to Grebel. I choose to retain the more conventional term, Anabaptist, in this review.)

It strikes me as unfortunate and unsettling to discover belatedly in the development of Anabaptist historiography that Karlstadt has been substantially overlooked in the considerable research that has been done in locating the origins of Anabaptist thought and practice. On the other hand, I am grateful that Pater has so meticulously done the research and published it so that midstream corrections can be made in our understanding of the origins of this stream of thought.

Pater lists the beliefs and practices which Karlstadt was instrumental in introducing into the Reformation scene and which early came to characterize a quite different perspective than that of either Luther, Zwingli or Calvin. Pater observes that Karlstadt was the first to challenge the veneration of the saints and the practice of mendicancy; to propose that only married clergy be exempted from taxation; to repudiate monastic vows; to conduct the first reformed communion service; to wear lay clothing to conduct a communion service; to introduce the abandonment of academic titles; to remove the organ and the images from the church building; to abolish infant baptism; and to publish an attack on the belief in the intercession of the Virgin Mary, not to mention that election is contingent on human choice, and that he champions a greater role for women than the other reformers, but rejects the legal oath.

Pater states matter-of-factly that he does not "propose a mono-causal scheme" when he labels Karlstadt the 'father of the Baptist movements' yet the remainder of his study would give the reader the impression that he does. His statement is a welcome caution however against our giving any one person, however seminal in his creativity, the credit for originating anything as rich as

Anabaptism early became. The times were complex and many new understandings were abroad that needed only a lucid advocate.

The book is heavily footnoted and it is well that it is, for this will enable anyone who questions the accuracy of his thesis to go to the sources to refute it or modify it if one can.

It is evident that Karlstadt's understanding of the Scripture was that it called for a strong social expression in one's faith and life. For example, he especially objected to images placed upon alters and argued instead that the wealth of the church should support the poor.

Pater acknowledges Grebel's prominence in the emergence of the Anabaptist movement in Zurich. He concludes: "... Grebel's letters to Müntzer must be examined, not to establish Grebel's eminence as the single leader, but because they remain the best witness to the doctrines of the Zurich Baptists just prior to their public break with Zwinglianism." We are indebted to J. C. Wenger for publishing a fine edition of Grebel's letter to Müntzer some years ago.

No doubt the ignominious end of Karlstadt may account best for his eclipse in tracing the development of Anabaptism. On page 168 Pater recognizes that "Felix Manz and his fellow Baptists would have been bitterly disappointed in Karlstadt's shirking of martyrdom and backsliding between good and evil, and they would have preferred to forget that their theological system originated with one who ended among the damned."

Pater traces the influence of Karlstadt also upon Hofmann and Menno Simons. While Karlstadt vigorously defended the canonicity of James and protested the inclusion of the Apocrypha with the inspired Scripture, he had little interest in prophecy so that he almost removed the Revelation from the canon.

There is such a wealth of information and commentary here that it is very difficult to know what to include in a review. But this fact is a further strong recommendation of this book to those seriously interested in following the development of Anabaptist research. I expect to see references and perhaps rebuttals to this work for years to come as the continuing research is published.

—Gerald C. Studer

Andreas Fischer and the Sabbatarian Anabaptists. By Daniel Liechty. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 1988. 192 pp. \$29.95 (\$41.95 in Canada).

Liechty here supplies the biography of a man that is not even given an entry in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, though the movement that he led is given brief attention under the heading of Sabbatarian Anabaptists.

Fischer was the main leader in a small Sabbatarian faction among the Anabaptists in the sixteenth century. He was a missionary for his cause during the 1540s in East Central Europe where his messages had considerable appeal to both the miners and the artisans and craftsmen in Slovakia.

Carefully reconstructed here are the lost Sabbatarian writings of Fischer and his collaborator Oswald Glaidt from whom Fischer learned the Sabbatarian teaching which Glaidt had formulated from an obscure point in Han Hut's preaching. Ironically, Glaidt himself ultimately abandoned Sabbatarianism and joined the Hutterites.

Since Sabbatarianism is quite a different focus for Anabaptism than the generally accepted one of pacifism, Liechty concludes that Fischer "never gave the subject of the sword enough thought to come up with a clear and consistent answer."

As the book's jacket says, this book "places the Sabbatarian teaching in the perspective of the 'restitution' theme of the Radical Reformation, raising important and probing questions concerning the hermeneutics employed by those Anabaptists who rejected Sabbatarianism. "A challenge that this book brings to Mennonite historiography is that this hermeneutic has been largely ignored.

Let me interrupt the further comment on this challenge to say that Liechty's writing style is tightly reasonable but always lucid. It is not insignificant that Samuele Bacchiocchi, Professor of Theology and Church History at Seventh Day Adventist Andrews University, and author of the most extensive study of Sabbatarianism in print today, should have been asked to write the Forward. He predictably commends this work and notices the selectivity with which Anabaptism has confronted the Roman Catholic and Pro-

testant theologies in light of Anabaptism's professed concern to rediscover and restore biblical teachings and practices.

Liechty observes that leading Anabaptists did not betray any strong feelings either positive or negative toward their Jewish contemporaries or toward the promises given to the Jews in the Old Testament. They simply applied these promises to the Christian Church, and the question of the integrity of post-Christian Judaism in the economy of salvation did not concern them. But it is to be noted that neither did they take the vindictive attitude toward the Jews and Judaism that the prominent reformers such as Luther and Calvin did.

Liechty develops at length the argument that Fischer offered for keeping the Sabbath rather than Sunday. He closes this book with the questions "why this Sabbatarianism was not better received among Anabaptists? Why was there not a mushrooming of Sabbatarian Anabaptist groups wherever Anabaptism was found?" He leaves these questions to the research and speculation of other scholars.

Daniel Liechty attended both Goshen and Eastern Mennonite Colleges and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, as well as the University of Budapest. He completed his doctorate in Vienna in 1983 and is currently the Director of the Stenton House Museum in Philadelphia. This book is Number 29 in the Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History series.

—Gerald C. Studer

Recent Publications

Miller, Andy J. and Alfred D. *Family History of David M. Miller and Susanna A. Weaver 1851-1985.* Ohio, 1985. Pp. 354. \$8.00. Order from Andy J. M. Miller, 12896 Nisley Rd. Box 288, Fredericksburg, OH 44627.

Miller, Lizzie Ellen. *Family History of Joel D. A. Troyer and Dina (Miller) Troyer.* Wolcottville, Indiana. Pp. 102. \$7.80. Order from author, Route 2. Box 279, Wolcottville, IN 46795.